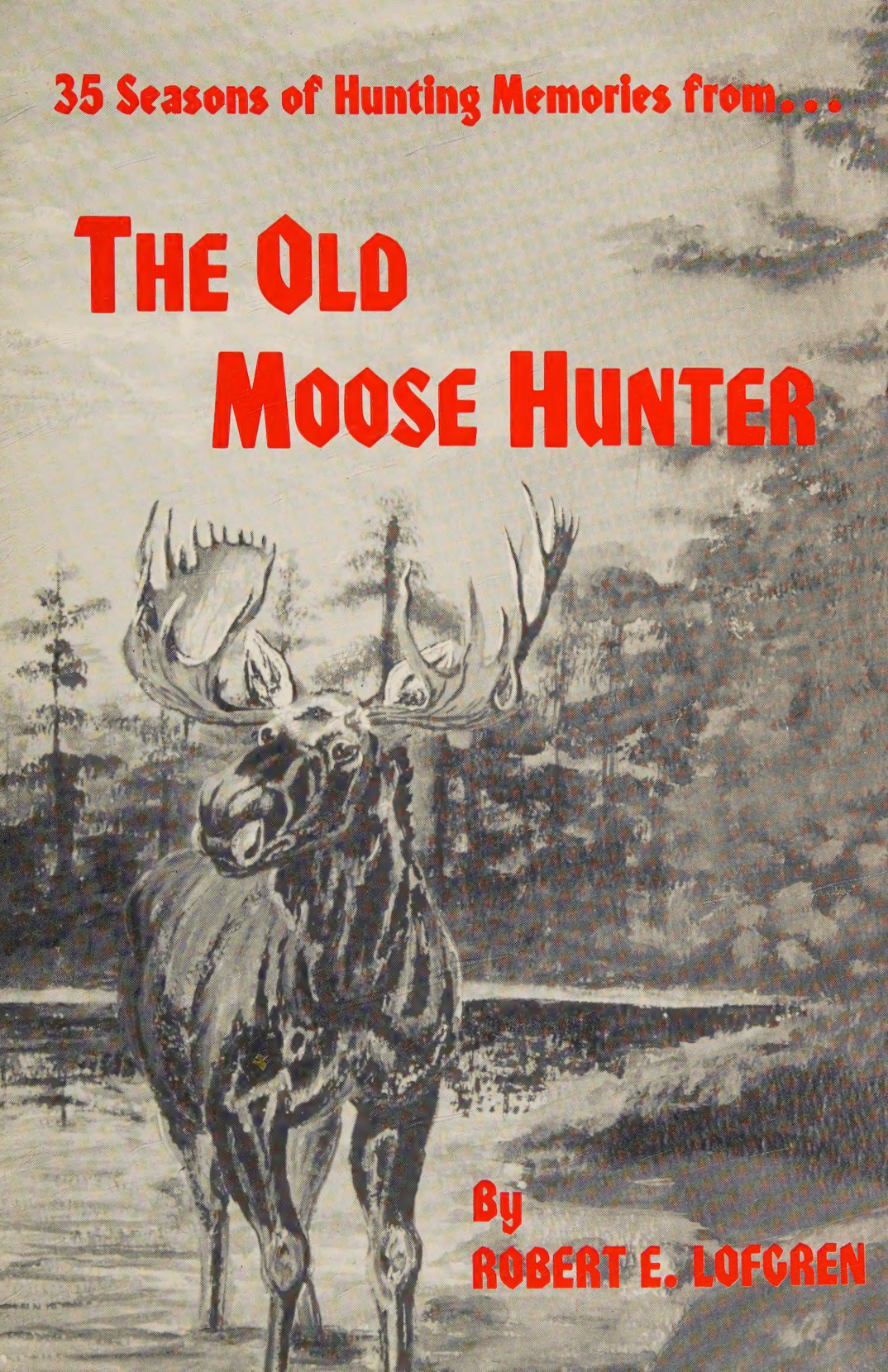
35 Seasons of Hunting Memories from...

THE OLD MOOSE HUNTER



By
ROBERT E. LOFGREN

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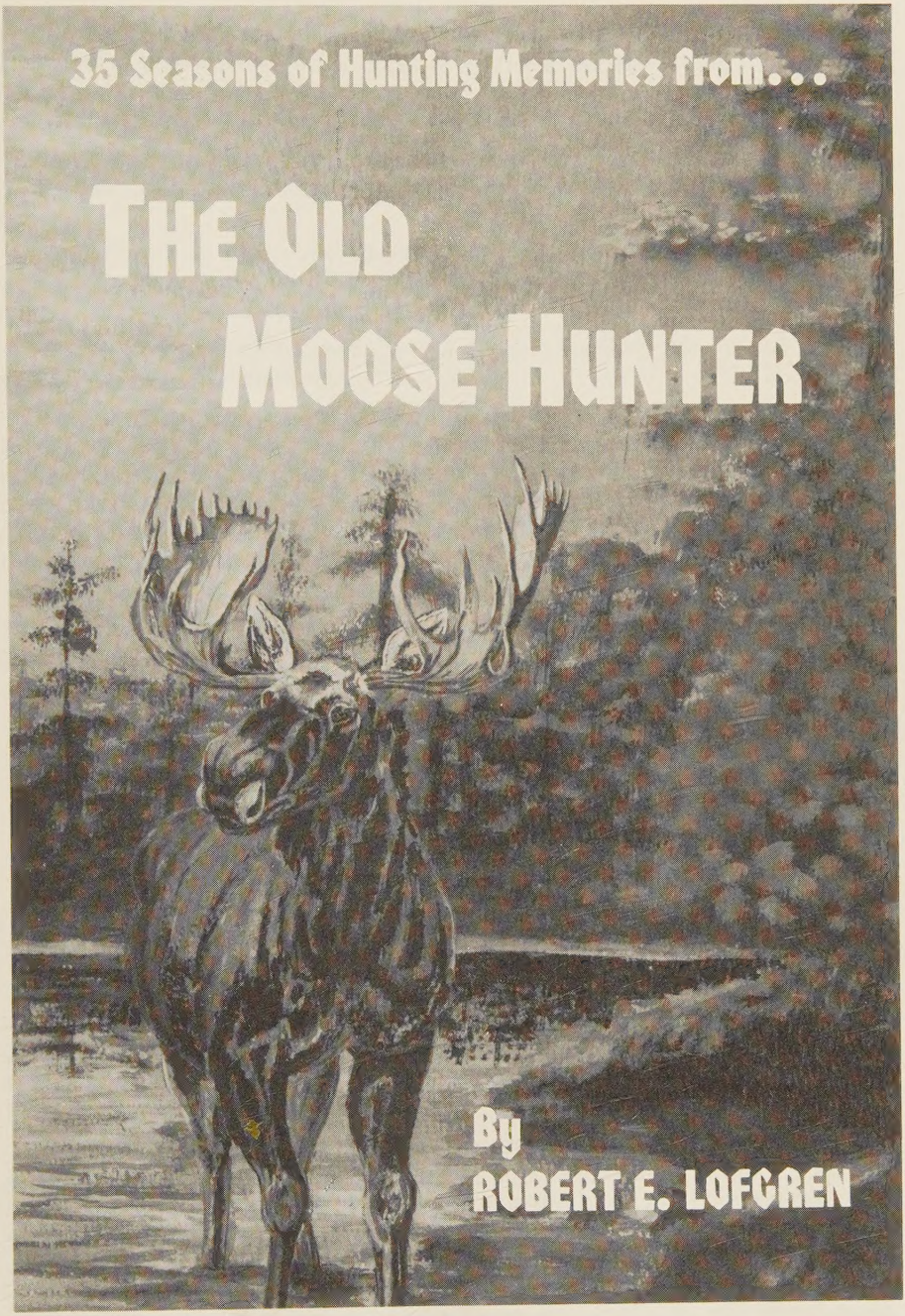

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APPRECIATION

First of all, I want to thank my dear wife Inez for taking care of the farm and the trucking business when I was gone on these moose hunting trips. Without her help, it would have been impossible for me to be writing this book. I especially want to thank Inez for the **tons** of food she prepared for us!!

I also want to thank my son David and my daughter Joanne for all their help while I was gone. Joanne would milk the cows so David could play football.

I also want to thank my grandchildren, Brian and Tracy Lofgren and Corey, Christina and Craig Ploetz, for their help. Brian, being the oldest, did chores for me while I was gone the later years.

I want to thank my brother Carl for hauling livestock for me the first few years that I went moose hunting.

I want to thank my sister Marion for letting her husband, Dr. Chauncey Kelsey, go with me. I want to thank Marion also for providing some of the pictures contained in this history. I want to thank Mrs. Carleton Kelsey (Chauncey's mother) for painting the picture of a moose. I want to thank my sister Audrey for doing all the typing for this book and also for the delicious homemade candy she used to send with us.

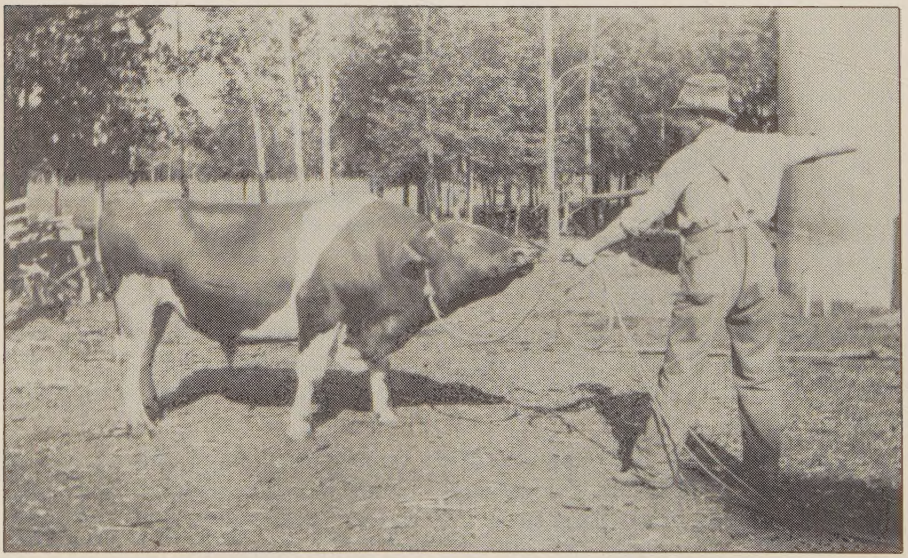
Last, but not least, I want to thank the Province of Ontario for making it possible for us to hunt moose in Ontario. I dare say no one has appreciated it more than I have.

I am Robert Lofgren, the youngest of four children born to Mr. and Mrs. August Lofgren of Rush City, Minnesota. I was born December 31, 1919. I was a husky boy of over 10 pounds at birth and always maintained a short and husky build.

On February 13, 1922 (the day of my brother Carl's 4th birthday), when I was just over two years old, my father was almost killed by a large holstein bull. It was 20 degrees below zero, so by the time the hired man got the bull away from my father and pulled him by hand-sled to the house, my father's hands were badly frozen. His chest was crushed and some ribs broken, but luckily the lungs were not punctured. The doctor from Rush City came out that night and sewed up the gashes and did what he could to make my dad comfortable; that was the only time the doctor visited my dad pertaining to that injury.

This is a picture of my father, one of the first times he was out of the house after he was injured by the bull. By the way, my father is holding what is now "The Old Moose Hunter."

My father recuperated, and by the month of May that year helped to load this bull into a horse-drawn cattle rack and hauled the bull to Rush City where he was loaded with other livestock onto a train cattle car and shipped to South St. Paul.



My father with the bull that nearly killed him. This picture was taken the day the bull was loaded in a cattle rack on a wagon and pulled by a team of horses to Rush City where he was loaded with other livestock into a railroad cattle car and sent to South St. Paul. (May, 1922)

My father was able to continue farming and caring for his family with no handicaps except that his chest and ribs caused discomfort for him at times for the rest of his life.

A little more than 10 years later, my father was to have another accident which would be fatal.

The day was Monday, September 12, 1932. Brother Carl was going on 15 years of age, and I was going on 13 years of age and in the eighth grade in school. Carl did not attend high school but had stayed at home on the farm. My father and brother Carl went to pick butternuts from a tree in a woods adjacent to our property. My father climbed the tree to shake down the nuts. The branch broke and my father fell about 25 feet to the ground. The doctor from Rush City was called and he arranged for an ambulance from Minneapolis to take my father to the St. Andrew's Hospital in Minneapolis. My father's back was broken, the spinal cord being completely severed, so he was paralyzed from the waist down. He spent eight weeks in St. Andrew's Hospital and six weeks at home. He died on December 20 and was buried on December 23, 1932.

This left my mother, two older sisters, my older brother and me to manage the farm. My two sisters graduated from High School in 1933. Soon after graduating, my older sister, Marion, began nurses training at Bethesda Hospital in Saint Paul and became a registered nurse. My other sister, Audrey, took a nine-month business course at Rasmussen School of Business in Saint Paul and has been doing secretarial work ever since.

Now, it was my mother, brother Carl and me on the farm. The "old-timers" will remember the great depression of the 1930s. There was no government relief, welfare, or food stamps, etc., so one just had to make the best of the situation.

My parents told me I was of Swedish descent, their reasoning being that both sets of grandparents had come from Sweden. I think there were some Indians lurking over in Sweden because I have always loved to hunt and love the wildlife. My father never owned a gun, but each Fall when the squirrels would eat too much corn out of the corn shocks, my father would borrow a double-barrel shotgun and take my brother and me squirrel hunting. That was for me the highlight of the year.

In 1934, a relative of ours through marriage, by the name of Sam Marty, went hunting on Fritz Hanson's property east of Hinckley. Fritz Hanson was Sam Marty's brother-in-law. Sam shot a beautiful buck and brought it home. My brother and I went to Sam's home that evening to see the buck. We decided we would like to try our luck. We did not have a gun and had very little money. I knew our neighbor boy wanted a bicycle so I traded my bicycle for his single barrel shotgun plus $3.00. That evening I went into Robinson's Hardware Store in Rush City and traded the shotgun and the $3.00 for a Winchester 1873 - 44.40 W.C.F. I thought we were now set to go hunting. We told my mother that we were going east of Hinckley to hunt deer. Mother was not very well and got so nervous and upset that we gave up our plan. The next day my

brother Carl, who was almost two years older than I, said he was going hunting. After a night's sleep, mother felt better and said that would be all right.

Carl went east of Hinckley to Fritz Hanson's farm and the two of them went hunting. Carl chased up a doe and a fawn and Fritz knew he dropped the fawn, but it was only after much searching that they found it. I will never forget how good that meat tasted. We did not have electricity at home to keep meat frozen and very little money to buy meat. I did not get to go deer hunting that year but I was very happy and thankful for the deer Carl brought home.

In my early hunting years, deer hunting was permitted only every other year (even-numbered years). The hunting season would run from November 15 through November 25 each season, regardless of the day of the week on which it would open. Now the season always opens on a Saturday.

I went hunting the same place in 1936 but did not see any deer. The game warden checked my license and I asked him why we did not see any deer. He said the prior winter had been very hard on the deer and many had starved to death so there were not many left. I asked the game warden if it were not possible to feed the deer when the winters were severe. He told me that making hay and corn available to the deer for food was of no help or benefit to the deer as they had to eat brush. He being a conservation officer, and I being just a farmer, I believed the officer.

In 1938 it was my brother's turn to go deer hunting. He brought home a nice buck again, and we did enjoy the meat so very much.

My Introduction to Moose Hunting

In 1939, when we shipped some livestock to South St. Paul, I rode with Floyd Anderson, the local cattle trucker, to watch the selling of the animals. As we drove through Forest Lake, I saw some large animals hanging in several trees. I asked Floyd if we could stop and look at them. The animals hanging in the trees were five bull moose that had been shot in Manitoba. The hunters were Wally Frederickson, who used a 32 Special W.C.F.; Ernie Millette, who used a 30-30 Winchester; Sam Richard with a 35 Remington automatic; and Roy Patrin with another 32 Spec. W.C.F. Roy Patrin had shot three bulls, one right after the other. I told Floyd Anderson, then and there, that if I ever could spare enough money, I wanted to hunt moose; I thought those bull moose were magnificent.

When I was a young boy, I would go with my father to Harris where we would go into the Stark Brothers Hardware store. There on two walls were six beautiful mounted moose heads. Albert Stark, Fred and Phillip Hals and John Berglund would go to Cook County in Northern Minnesota to hunt moose. I believe these visits to the Stark store in Harris were what triggered my desire to hunt moose. Then, seeing the five beautiful moose hanging from trees in Forest Lake, I was determined to hunt moose some day — but where? The last season in Minnesota was in 1922, and Canada closed its seasons to non-residents about 1940.

These are pictures taken prior to 1922, the year Minnesota was closed to moose hunting; to be reopened in 1971.

Albert Stark and Fred Hals in front of Stark Hardware Store in Harris, sometime between 1905 and 1922. Minnesota moose season about 1911.

Moose swimming in a lake in Minnesota. Taken before 1922.

Albert Stark and hunting companions in Minnesota. Pulling a sled load of moose and antlers, prior to 1922.

Fred Hals on a moose hunting expedition in Minnesota prior to 1922.

Albert Stark having lunch on a moose hunting trip in Minnesota prior to 1922.

Fred Hals and Albert Stark having some sustenance while moose hunting in Minnesota prior to 1922.

John Berglund and Albert Stark at a trapper's cabin while hunting moose in Minnesota prior to 1922.

Albert Stark and two companion trappers in Minnesota prior to 1922.

One of Albert Stark's trophies on the wall of the Stark Hardware Store in Harris. This picture was made into a postcard which Albert used to write to his sister telling her they had electric lights in the Hardware Store.

A moose just shot by Albert Stark in Minnesota prior to 1922.

Deer taken by Albert Stark and his hunting companions prior to 1922.

John Berglund and Albert Stark in their home while hunting.

In 1940, three men from Rush City (Kenneth Robinson, Clayton Moulton and Emil Anderson) invited me to go with them to Northern Minnesota to hunt deer that season. These men were some years older than I, but I was thrilled with the invitation. Then came the great Armistice Day Blizzard of 1940! My mother, sister Audrey, Loureena Anderson and brother Carl had driven to Minot, North Dakota that weekend to visit sister Marion who had married Dr. Chauncey M. Kelsey and were living in Minot. On their return on Monday, November 11, they were caught in the storm. Carl was able to drive into the town of Crookston, Minnesota and drive to the train station. There mother, Audrey and Loureena boarded the train.

The train was supposed to be able to travel through any storm or weather situation. The train stood on the tracks in Crookston for 12 hours. My mother had had a heart attack while in Minot, but insisted on returning home with the others. While on the train, G. Howard Spaeth, then Minnesota Tax Commissioner, was so very kind and helpful with my mother. Mr. Spaeth had arranged upon arrival at the Saint Paul train depot, to have mother transported to Bethesda Hospital. After a few days in the hospital, mother was able to come home.

Brother Carl had stayed with the car in Crookston and was able to get home with the car on Wednesday afternoon, the day I was to go hunting. I thought I should give up going hunting, but my three partners insisted that I

go, so we left on Thursday. At Christmas, 1987, I received a book *(All Hell Broke Loose)* from my family. This book tells many true stories of the Armistice Blizzard in 1940, and I, for one, will never forget the storm.

I shot the first deer on the first day of this hunting trip—a swamp buck almost black in color. In the afternoon, Kenneth Robinson shot two small fawns. On Sunday a friend of my partner, Chick Beckstrom, joined us to hunt. He slightly wounded a large buck in its hind leg. Three of us trailed him all Sunday afternoon when he eluded us by going into the game refuge. On Monday, at our request, the game warden went with us to trail the buck as we were not allowed in the refuge alone. He was a very smart buck as I saw him go out of the refuge behind us, right in our very own tracks. Shortly we saw a doe and we told Clayton Moulton to shoot it as he had not yet had any shooting opportunity. The second Clayton dropped the doe, it occurred to me we were trailing within the refuge. I shouted to the other men, "Boys, we are in the refuge!!" Just then I looked behind us and saw the sign "Refuge - No Hunting." We had exited the refuge by just a short distance.

We asked the warden what he would have done if we had been back 100 feet. He just smiled. I thought that was a piece of extraordinary good luck.

The following day, Monday, Emil Anderson and I went back to trail the buck as we had plenty of snow for tracking and no newly fallen snow. We trailed the buck all day. He had not been hurt very bad as we could tell by his tracks that he was feeding in different places. I am sure the cord above his hind knee was cut off as that foot made a little scoop in the deep snow and the tracks showed he walked on three legs. It was getting dusk and I asked Emil Anderson to stand by an opening and I would make one last circle. Very shortly I chased another buck and a doe by Emil and he shot the buck. We dressed out the buck.

I asked Emil to carry my rifle and lead the way, and I would drag the deer. After I had dragged the buck a ways, I told Emil, "This will be easy as someone else has dragged a deer here." "No," Emil said. "This is our own tracks. We have made a circle." We decided to leave the deer where it was and try to pick up our own tracks back through the woods which we were able to do in the dark. It was quite late when we came out to the car where Kenneth and Clayton were waiting. They were quite worried about us. The next day we went back for the buck, but we never saw or shot the large buck we had been trailing.

We were now "filled out" and made plans to go home. In the cabin in the evening I told my partners about the moose that I had seen the previous year hanging in trees in Forest Lake. I mentioned that I would like to hunt moose some time. Kenneth Robinson said, "Bob, you will not be able to hunt moose because the Minnesota moose herd is down to almost nothing so Minnesota has "closed season" for moose hunting and Canada has "closed season" to non-residents and probably will not again be open for moose hunting because of the low moose population and the large number of Canadians who want to hunt them." Of course, I was disappointed, but just accepted that that was the way it would be.

Then came 1941 and the terrible Second World War. There was no deer hunting season in 1941, but in 1942 I wanted to go hunting. My Uncle Elmer, born February 22, 1895, and named George Washington Elmer Lofgren, had been in World War I and was a very patriotic man. At the request of the family, Uncle Elmer wrote a brief summary of his time in the service in World War I.

"I entered military service on February 24, 1918 at Center City, Minnesota, and I left the same day by troop train from Saint Paul for Camp Dodge, Iowa. We stayed at Camp Dodge until April 6; Company D, 350th Infantry, 88th Division. Then we were transferred to Camp Sevier, South Carolina, Company E, 117th Infantry, 30th Division. We were trained there until May 2; then we left Camp Sevier for Camp Mills, New York. The Division went overseas in early May, 1918. I was left behind in a hospital. I went home from New York to Harris, Minnesota on June 6 on furlough until July 6, when I returned to Camp Mills, New York.

"On July 15, 1918, we began our journey overseas, going first to Boston, Massachusetts; then leaving Boston on a mule boat (Winifredian) for Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. We stayed at Halifax in the boat 48 hours waiting for a convoy of 24 boats to assemble to cross the Atlantic Ocean together. We had one submarine attack but no boats were lost. We landed in Bristol, England on July 31, 1918. We stayed in England a couple of days, then left South Hampton, England, to go across the channel. We arrived in Port LeHarve, France on August 4, 1918.

"I caught up with my original outfit on August 15, up in Flanders near Ypres, Belgium. We saw some military action there. Ypres was where gas was first used by the Germans earlier in the war. We did have gas masks and used them many times.

"Next we went to Somme front. We went over the top five times and chased the Germans back 20 miles. We broke the Hindenberg Line on September 29, 1918. We were here until the end of the war on November 11, 1918. Our Company consisted of over 250 men who walked in and I was one of 28 men who could walk out.

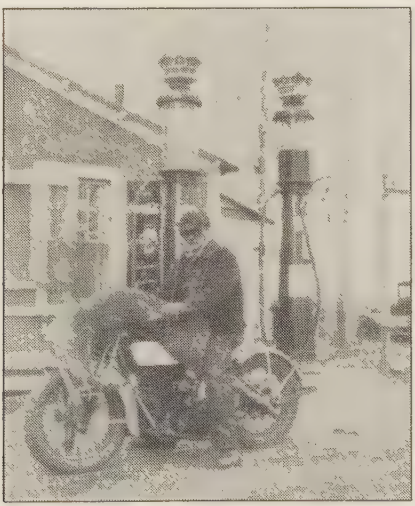
"117 decorations were given in my Division; I got none. We all received medals; mine has three bars (Ypres, L.Y.S., Somme Offensive-Offensive Sector). My motto was, "I would rather be a live coward than a dead hero."

"Our Division, the 30th, captured 98 officers, 3,750 men prisoners, 72 pieces of artillery, 26 trench mortars and 426 machine guns. We suffered 8,415 casualties (killed and wounded). After November 11, 1918, we moved to Courcemont, France, and stayed there until February 8, 1919, when we moved to LeMans, France. We were there until March 9 when we went to St. Nazaire seaport and left for home on March 16, 1919. "Pocahontas" was the name of our boat. We landed in Charleston, South Carolina on March 28 and went to Camp

Jackson, South Carolina by train. We left South Carolina by train on April 6 for Camp Dodge, Iowa. We were mustered out on April 10 and arrived home in Harris, Minnesota on April 12, 1919. I was 23 years old when I entered military service in 1918 and 24 years old when I was discharged in 1919."

In World War II, gas and car tires were rationed, so Uncle Elmer told us we should not use gas and tires to go deer hunting. I had purchased a 1928 model Indian Scout motorcycle for $35.00, so I decided I would use that for my hunting trip. I filled the motorcycle with gas and oil, which cost 40¢. I tied my Winchester 44-40 across the handle bars of the motorcycle and headed out to Fritz Hanson's place East of Hinckley. Again, I shot a nice two-point buck the first morning of hunting; I tied it on my motorcycle and headed home.

For some reason or other, the hunters traveling the highway stared at me. I do not think I have seen such a motorcycle/deer combination since!!



November 1942 deer season; this deer was taken 25 miles east of Hinckley, Minnesota by Robert Lofgren of Rush City.

It just so happens that this picture was taken at Jim Jordan's gas station East of Hinckley. I had the opportunity to haul some livestock for Jim Jordan. I would like to state a few facts concerning this world record happening taken from a column written by Dave Roberts for *The Cincinnati Post* in about 1978.

65 Years Later, Jordan's Deer Finally A Record

The mills of the gods grind slowly, as we all know. But sometimes they grind even slower than that. Consider the case of James Jordan.

James was only 21 years old when he shot his big buck. That was 65 years ago. The rack of horns has run a long course since then, and Jordan has died. The fact that it was he whose whitetail head set a world record was not officially established until last December, two months after Jordan's death.

Young Jimmy was working the big woods along the banks of the Yellow River, up where the Michigan and Minnesota borders meet south of Duluth. It was autumn and ruffed grouse were rocketing through the scarlet and yellow hardwoods. Ducks and geese, by the thousands, were moving high overhead on their Fall migrations. It was a great lake country, with big muskellunge in the waters of the St. Croix flowage, of which the Yellow was a part.

Jim realized, when he walked up to the whitetail, dead in the forest, that he had killed an unusual buck. When he got it back to the town of Danbury, his view was affirmed by many hunters. But, there was no record system at the time, and there was no way to confirm his belief. The cape and rack went to one George VanCastle, a part-time taxidermist, who agreed to mount them. He carried the trophy to his home in nearby Webster, Wisconsin and started work. Before the mount was completed, however, VanCastle moved to Florida and left the horns at his former house. The horns were purchased by one Robert Ludwig for $3.00 at a rummage sale. Some years later a New Hampshire collector of deer antlers, Dr. Charles T. Arnold, heard of the Jordan trophy and bought it.

Jim Jordan's "record" deer antlers.

In the interim the Boone and Crockett Club's precise record system was being perfected and the club was documenting big game statistics. Bernard A. Fashingbauer, of Minneapolis, got wind of the big head and was given permission to measure it for Boone and Crockett. It was decided that it was, in fact, a world record, and it was so listed in the 1971 edition of North American Big Game Awards. *But, while the rack was recognized, the hunter was not. Dr. Arnold did not know the name of the hunter and, presumably, neither had Robert Ludwig, although the latter must have had a hunch. He was a distant relative of James Jordan, and, Jordan, viewing the horns in Ludwig's home, had said he felt certain they came from his long-dead Yellow River buck.*

In late 1977, Dr. Arnold wrote to NABGA, suggesting that a full scale inquiry be set up to try to determine the identity of the hunter. The listing in 1971 showed "hunter unknown." Fashingbauer, since he knew something of the history and had made the original measurements, was selected to do the detective work. He gathered a convincing mass of facts and figures, all of which indicated that the trophy was, indeed, that taken by Jordan back in 1914. The next edition of the official record books will carry that information.

The new listings will not appear until 1983, for the usual publication cycle is six years. By that time, Jimmy Jordan will have been dead six years.

In the interim some other whitetail hunter may surpass the 206-3/8 points with which the Jordan rack is credited.

But, it is not likely.

The Boone and Crockett system of scoring big game trophies is comparatively new, although the organization is not. It was founded in 1887 by Theodore Roosevelt, himself an ardent outdoorsman, as an organization devoted to riflemen and conservation. The club's scoring system has evolved gradually down through the years and now is co-sponsored by the National Rifle Association in Washington, D.C., as the North American Big Game Awards Program. Boone and Crockett has its headquarters at 424 North Washington Street, Alexandria, Virginia.

The following article, written by Ron Schara for the *Minneapolis Tribune* on March 4, 1979, covers the same interesting subject.

"Now It's Official: Record Buck Was Jim's"
Minneapolis Tribune, March 4, 1979
by Ron Schara

His was not a dream of riches or fame. And publicity, he did not seek.

Jim Jordan's hope was simply to be believed. And therefore to set the record books straight. Not to soothe his own ego. Lordy, he was an old man who long ago heard the hollow sounds of patting one's own back.

It was the world record whitetail buck that needed a better fate.

The magnificent animal, sporting the largest, most perfect set of antlers ever found in North America, was duly ranked No. 1 in the Boone and Crockett Big Game Record Book.

But, sadly, the date of the deer's death was listed as "unknown." The hunter was "unknown." Where the big buck had been killed was listed in the record book as in the locality of Sandstone, Minnesota. But that was just a guess since the mounted antlers of the world-record whitetail were merely discovered in Sandstone 14 years ago.

Surely the record book should be more complete for such a trophy, if only to demonstrate respect.

Particularly when Jim Jordan could answer the missing details and correct the errors.

Particularly when Jim Jordan knew he was the hunter who had killed the world-record whitetail buck on a sunny November 20 in 1914 along the Yellow River near Danbury, Wisconsin.

An unforgettable buck, it was. Each main beam 30 inches long; more than 6 inch circumference at the base of each antler; a perfect five points on each side.

But who would believe the old man's story? Of how a week after Jordan killed the buck, a taxidermist by the name of George Van Castle volunteered to mount the trophy for Jordan. But shortly thereafter, the taxidermist moved and Jordan never saw his deer for 50 years. And then only as a result of bizarre circumstances. Robert Ludwig, a distant relative of Jordan's, bought a large set of antlers at a rummage sale in Sandstone about 13 years ago, unaware that the antlers were of world-record size. Jordan was invited to see the antlers and when he did, he knew right away "that was my buck."

While Jordan was convinced, Ludwig was not. Ludwig later sold the newly-proclaimed world-record whitetail to a New Hampshire antler collector, Charles Arnold, for $1,500.

Two years ago, following a tip from a reader, I visited Jim Jordan and his wife, Lena, in their home east of Hinckley, Minnesota, near the St. Croix River. The result of that visit was a column, which appeared in this space.

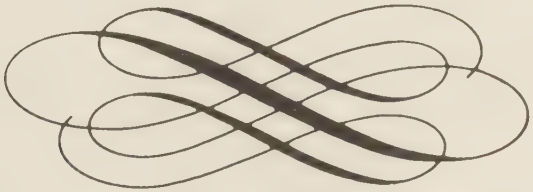
Jim Jordan's story was sent to officials of the National Rifle Association which now administers the Boone and Crockett records program. Bernard Fashingbauer of St. Paul, an official measurer for

Boone and Crockett, conducted his own investigation into Jordan's story.

Last Week, Boone and Crockett officials announced that, after reviewing the evidence, Jim Jordan's name will go in the record book as the hunter who bagged the largest whitetail in the world.

And, so, nearly 65 years after it started, Jim Jordan's deer hunting story has come to an end.

Unfortunately, Jordan will never know. He died last October at the age of 86."



My mother died April 12, 1943. I had a girl friend at that time, pure Swedish, by the name of "Inez Johnson." I decided I wanted to be "on my own" so I bought a livestock trucking business from Charles Olson of Rush City. I sold my motorcycle for $75.00, and I had $75.00, which made a total of $150.00. Charles Olson wanted $650.00 for the truck and business, so I borrowed $500.00 from the Rush City Bank. Mr. Anderson at the bank was much opposed to loaning me the $500.00 but, after my mortgaging 21 cows and our young stock to meet the security requirement, he decided to let me have the money. I still have the chattel mortgage.

In November 1943, Chisago County opened for deer season for the first time since Minnesota started having deer hunting seasons. My brother-in-law, Dr. Chauncey M. Kelsey, and his father, Dr. Carleton G. Kelsey, came from Saint Paul to hunt with my brother and me. We went down toward the St. Croix River. The snow was very deep and deer were being shot, but we did not see any. Finally a large buck came by my brother. I let my brother use my 44-40 and I used my shotgun. I knew he was a better "shot" than I was and, sure enough, he dropped the buck. A hunter, who turned out to be a neighbor, came on the track a little later and showed us where he had hit the buck in the foot. He had shot the doe that was with the buck, but he still claimed the buck. We drove past his place many times to look at the buck hanging from his hay rope. I think he never did use the buck for any purpose. We really felt bad about that.

In the spring of 1944, I purchased a 120-acre farm from Charles Wetzel for $5,000. On August 19, 1944, Inez and I were married at the Rush Point Lutheran Church. I was sick the day before we were married, and about three days later I was sure I had a severe case of undulant fever. Blood tests con-

firmed that I did have undulant fever. I was told that the son of Henry Ford, the automobile manufacturer, had died from this disease. My brother-in-law, Dr. Chauncey M. Kelsey, sent me to Bethesda Hospital in Saint Paul and took good care of me. In a few months I was quite well. The 1944 deer season was coming close and Dr. Kelsey said it was all right for me to go hunting as he would be with me.

In the deer hunting season of 1944, we went East of Hinckley again. The first morning of hunting, I shot a nice two-point buck with the 44-40. In the afternoon I got a nice buck fawn. My brother and another partner had shot two fawns, so we had almost our quota of deer. We surely enjoyed eating this deer meat when we got home.

On September 24 of 1945, our son David was born. Also in this year, the State opened the St. Croix State Park for deer hunting. We took our cattle truck in which to live while hunting in the Park. I took 25 shells and my 44-40 with me. There were deer all over the Park. I was so excited that I was out of ammunition by 10 o'clock and I had shot only two deer. I shot my third deer the second day and, with the deer the others had shot, we had filled our tags. We considered ourselves very lucky that no one was hurt.

In 1946 we went to the same area but found very few deer. After a few days of hunting, the seven of us shot two deer and we decided to go home.

On May 18, 1947, our daughter Joanne was born. That Fall we decided to go to Northern Minnesota to hunt our deer. We went to Baudette, over to Williams, and South to the Faunce Tower. It was a large area with much wilderness. My brother got lost and gave us a good scare so we departed with only three deer for the seven of us hunters.

On our way home from this trip, at night, I was driving our 1946 Chevrolet when the car lights shone on something ahead on the road. At first I thought it was a horse; then we saw it was a large bull moose. As we drove closer to the animal, he started to trot faster. I managed to hold him on the road for some time. A car caught up to us, and the occupants told us that "Now they had seen everything." They first thought we had a horse pulling our car. Finally I could not hold the moose in lead position any longer and he crossed the deep ditch into the brush. That was the first moose we had seen. Now I had seen a LIVE moose in Minnesota.

In 1948 we decided to hunt closer to home. We went East of Sandstone to Kingsdale. A tremendous snowstorm greeted us as we started hunting. Then the "flu" descended on us. After hunting for several days, we gave up the quest and went home with no deer.

In 1949 we went back to the Faunce Tower in Northern Minnesota. Again we lived in the cattle truck. We saw quite a few deer. Bert Ovitt got a buck the first morning and my brother got a large buck late the first evening of hunting. Dr. Chauncey Kelsey shot a buck the second morning. I shot a fawn that same morning and a doe in the afternoon, so we were filled out and headed for home. This was one of the most successful and pleasant hunting trips we have had.

Minnesota had no deer hunting season in 1950 so we five hunters decided to go to Canada to do our hunting. The hunting license was only $25.00 but the deer were scarce. We hired Indian guides but got only two deer. Driving home through the night there were deer all along the road in Minnesota.

Our deer hunting group in 1950. Left to right, Dr. Chauncey Kelsey, Robert Lofgren, Carl Lofgren, Bert Ovitt and Dr. Carleton Kelsey.

David and Joanne and deer hunters upon our return from deer hunting in Canada in 1950.

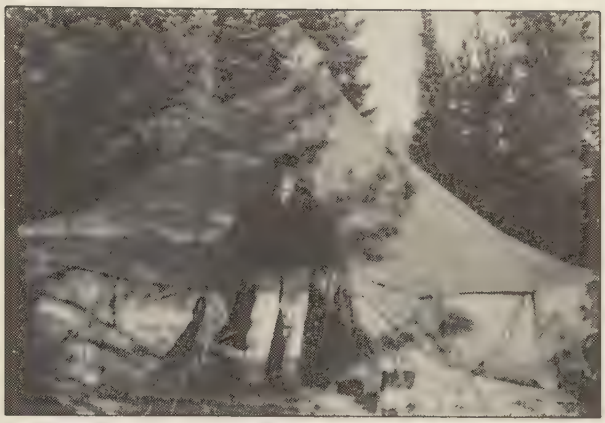
In 1951 we again went to Faunce Tower in Northern Minnesota. I hunted alone. I missed a buck by a hair; I sprayed deer hair on the snow. A short time later I saw a large bull moose. Now I had seen two moose in Minnesota. Bert Ovitt shot a doe and a fawn that season, and that is all we got. The snow was very deep and the deer seemed to disappear fast.

In the summer of 1952, my brother-in-law, Dr. Chauncey Kelsey, advised me that we could apply for moose hunting permits in the State of Wyoming. We both mailed our applications for moose hunting permits; I was very lucky and received a permit.

When the hunting season arrived, we drove to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and up into the Teton Mountains. I borrowed a 270 rifle from Dr. Chauncey Kelsey which I was told would drop any moose. I was on one ridge and saw two young bull moose on a ridge across the valley. I went down through the valley and was lucky enough to see one moose broad-side. I aimed and fired, and the moose disappeared. I thought the moose should drop if I had hit it, so I did not spend much time looking for blood signs as there was no snow on the ground. After further moose hunting experience, I am sure that I did hit the moose in 1952 and could have found it had I searched longer. We had my Uncle Vern, a rancher and a storekeeper, all from Wyoming, with us. The rancher shot a moose for me. These three men and Chauncey had elk licenses and never saw any elk or any deer. We had two empty deer tags in our possession and there were deer all along the road through the night as we drove in Wyoming towards home. We were rather disappointed with this trip, but we realized we were very inexperienced at hunting in this area. This was my first moose hunt and, looking back now, I knew I had a lot to learn.

Our horse, used in the Tetons in Wyoming, 1952.

Far up in the Grand Tetons in Wyoming, 1952. Martin Tadlock from Wyoming taking out one-half of our moose.



Chauncey Kelsey in front of our tent. Teton Mountains in Wyoming, 1952.

Robert Lofgren taking a rest. My first moose hunting trip, in the Grand Teton Mountains in Wyoming, 1952.

Then in November of 1952, our hunting party went back to Faunce Tower to hunt deer. My brother came into camp one night and said he had seen the biggest buck he had ever seen in his life. He could not see it very clearly in the brush and he said it did not act like a deer. After additional experience, he came to know that it was a moose he had seen rather than a large buck.

The next day, Bert Ovitt and Perry Peterson came face-to-face with a large bull moose. Now we were beginning to see moose on occasion in Minnesota. This season was Perry Peterson's first deer hunting experience and he shot a beautiful buck and a fawn. I shot a doe; my brother shot a fawn, and Bert Ovitt shot a small buck. We went home with five deer which was a good harvest!

While we were at the Chisago County Fair in 1953, Kenneth Robinson came to me and said, "Bob, Ontario is going to open to non-residents for

moose hunting." I was pretty thrilled as now I could hunt moose closer to home. I took my wife, David and Joanne, and went to Ontario over Labor Day weekend to see what I could learn about hunting possibilities there. I was not able to get much information about moose hunting. The people with whom I talked did not seem interested in non-residents coming to hunt moose. I did learn that each license-holder could take one moose, one deer, one bear, ducks and geese.

The 1953 moose hunting season opened October 1 and extended through October 15 for bulls only. My brother-in-law, Dr. Chauncey Kelsey, and his father, Dr. Carleton Kelsey, and I headed for some place in Ontario. We went to Vermillion Bay, and some people with whom we talked advised us to go up the Red Lake Road, which we did. On our way we saw quite an elderly man sawing wood. We decided to stop and talk with him. I explained that I had wanted to hunt moose for so many years and wondered if he could give us any helpful advice. He looked at me and said, "I like to see a man get his moose!" He told us to go up to Ear Falls and any place around Lac Seoul where we should see some moose. We took a small road leading off from the main road and shortly came to a power line. We set up our tent under the power line, made a good supper, and went to bed. About 12:00 midnight, a man came in our tent and told us we would have to move as we were on his driveway and we could not use it. We asked if we could stay where we were until morning. He said that was all right if we would move early in the morning. Early in the morning, we did pack up our possessions and found a gravel pit nearby where we again set up camp. We finally were ready to go to look for a moose.

As I mentioned in my paragraph on our 1952 hunting experience, I had borrowed that year a 270 caliber gun from Dr. Chauncey Kelsey. That same season, Dr. Kelsey traded the 270 caliber gun to my Uncle Vern in Wyoming for his Winchester 32 special. Later I bought the Winchester 32 special from Dr. Kelsey for $40.00. Now I had a Winchester lever action, a gun that was quite a bit larger than my old 44-40. I did not like the 270 caliber gun because it was a bolt-action rifle.

On this particular hunting trip, Chauncey's father, Dr. Carleton Kelsey, accompanied us just to be a part of the trip and to take pictures; he really did not hunt. Chauncey went one direction and I went another. I found a trail close to the power line that moose were using. I really was excited. I walked along very quietly and carefully and there I saw something black in the brush! I knew it had to be a moose! Being very eager to get a moose, I aimed at the dark object as it was moving. I fired, and the object sped up. I shot four or five times and the animal disappeared. I was accustomed to my old 44-40 holding 14 cartridges and the 32 special held only 7 cartridges, so I thought I better reload. Just as I started to reload the gun, the moose came back out onto the trail and disappeared over a ridge. In a second, another moose followed the first moose, but I could not get another shot at the moose. I quickly looked for blood and found some, but not sufficient to trail it. I looked and looked all afternoon but found no trace of the moose. It was getting dark and I thought I better

get back to camp. That was a long walk back to camp, all the while thinking about how I really "blew that chance."

When I got back to camp, Chauncey had not seen any moose, but he and his father had a good supper ready. I told them about my blunder and then we all went to bed early. We were up early the next day, had a good breakfast (our favorite being bacon and eggs), and were in the bush again. Chauncey went his way and I went back to my spot. I was quite tired and disgusted with myself, so I climbed up on a windfall and just watched for a while. I heard a branch crack in the distance and then a noise that could be something like a man's voice. My first thought was that hunters were coming through the bush toward me. Then I heard another branch crack, but then there was complete silence for quite a while, followed by the same noise again but closer. I really watched closely but heard nothing more and saw nothing. Then, in a small opening quite a way off, I saw a bull moose!! Being very excited and anxious, I fired very fast. Again the moose took off. I could still see him so I fired three more times. Again, the moose disappeared. My first thought was—did I lose this one too?? I jumped down from my perch and hurried toward the place where I had last seen the moose. I heard something crashing and the moose was up against a windfall. Now, this bull was mine! I was the happiest man alive. I had shot my first moose. I dressed him out and blazed a trail out to the other trail.

My first moose shot near Ear Falls off from the Red Lake Road, North of Vermillion Bay, Ontario, 1953.

Now I thought, "How do I get him out of here?" It was a beautiful day and I knew there was a very nice little creek about a mile farther down the trail so I decided to go there and wash up. I wound up taking a complete bath. I felt on top of the world so I thought I better go back to camp and see about getting help to move the moose out. As I walked along the trail back to camp, up jumped a deer. Quickly I shot at it and it dropped. Up jumped another deer, and I also dropped that one. I felt I was getting really lucky now. I dressed out

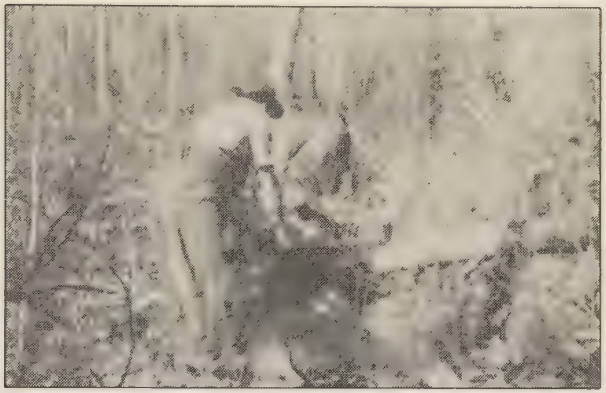
both deer and made another trip to the creek for cleansing. This time I headed for camp in earnest.

When I got to camp, Chauncey was still in the bush, but his father greeted me and was very pleased with my luck. He told me he had seen a small Caterpillar tractor go by with a horse tied behind it. I was thrilled now to know that there was a horse in the area. Chauncey came back to camp about dusk and had not seen anything. He was almost as thrilled as I was about my luck. We had a good supper, chicken, potatoes, milk, coffee, cookies, cake, apple pie, all brought from our homes.

The next day we decided that Chauncey would hunt again and Dr. Kelsey, Sr. and I would take the car and follow the Caterpillar and horse tracks. It was Sunday so the men were not working the horses. I asked the foreman if I could hire him and a horse to pull a moose out of the bush. He said he really did not care to go out on Sunday. I told him I was a farmer from Minnesota and had driven horses all my life. I asked him whether he would consider renting the horse to me. That was agreeable with him. It was a lively buckskin horse.

Our moose hunting trip in Ontario, Canada, 1953. I rented a horse from a lumber camp with which I pulled my moose and two deer out to the car and trailer, 1953.

Another picture of the very good horse that I used to pull out my moose in 1953 on our hunting trip in Ontario.



Our moose hunting trip in Ontario, Canada, 1953. Pulling our moose.

The buckskin and I walked our five miles back to camp plus the additional three miles to where my moose lay. I had cleared a good trail through the bush from where the moose was shot so I was able to get the horse in and hook onto the moose. After I got the moose out on the trail, I went down to get both deer. I tied them behind the moose. It was quite a load for the horse, but I let him rest at spots while I cut windfalls that were blocking the trail. The horse was used to eating grass and brush, so he was content to eat as soon as we stopped while I was working.

On our way home from moose hunting in Ontario, Canada, in 1953.

Dr. Kelsey was behind us taking pictures. We brought the moose and both deer out to the car and trailer, loaded the deer into the trailer and, with the help of the horse, loaded the moose into the trailer. Now we had completed our getting the moose and deer on board so we headed back to camp. Then we returned the horse to the lumber camp. I told the foreman how very much I appreciated his generosity and asked him how much I owed him for the use of the horse. He asked, "How would $6.00 be?" I told him that was great and I

again told him that I appreciated his kindness very much. Now I could ride in the car back to camp. Again, Chauncey had not seen anything, but we decided we had had pretty good luck and would go home. This was the first moose to be brought into Rush City for many years so it created quite a bit of interest.

Our son David and daughter Joanne leaving for school the day after I came home from hunting moose in Ontario in 1953.

Son David Lofgren holding the reliable 32 special Winchester and daughter Joanne. First moose hunting trip in Canada, 1953.

My first moose, shot in 1953, hanging in the locker plant in Rush City, Minnesota.

In November 1953, our deer hunting party went back to Faunce Tower in Northern Minnesota. Deer seemed to be getting very scarce there. My brother shot a large doe and later a fawn, but that is about all we saw so we were quite discouraged. No one saw any moose.

In the Fall of 1954, Chauncey Kelsey and his dad, Carleton Kelsey, and I headed for Canada again to try our luck for another moose. This time we went to Dryden and north to Richan. We hired a guide by the name of Herb Keller to help us. We hunted several days without seeing any moose, but then early one morning a moose came running fast out onto the old logging road on which I was walking. The moose was quite a distance from me and running straight away from me. I had not seen a moose yet in the several days we had been hunting this season so I thought I better at least try for this one. I shot rapidly four times; then the moose turned into the bush and was gone.

I followed the moose into the bush and found quite a bit of blood. The trailing was easy at first but then the blood trail practically vanished. It was about 7:00 a.m. that I shot at the moose. The only track I had to follow now was the hoof track and once in a while there would be a drop of blood. The trailing was quite easy in the soft swamp, but over the ridges I was on my hands and knees to trail the moose. Soon I came out onto another logging road and there was our guide, Herb Keller. I told him of my luck and he agreed to help me. After a short time he said it was useless to continue the trailing. I told him that I never give up and would follow longer.

I walked a short way when Herb yelled, "I hear him." Then I got a glimpse of the moose running. I was determined this time to shoot the moose. His head was high; I shot him right between the ears from behind. This was at exactly 11:00 a.m. so it had taken me four hours to catch up to him, but finally getting the moose was a great satisfaction. The moose was a long way into the swamp and Herb did not know of any horse nearby, so we decided to quarter the moose and carry it out. That was quite a job. Of course we could not take any pictures of the moose as it was in quarters! We decided then that it is not much fun to bring a moose home in pieces. Chauncey had not seen any moose yet.

The next afternoon Herb Keller wounded a bull so I helped him trail it. Again, the blood trail ceased and Herb said it was getting late so we better head back to camp. I told him I wanted to trail a little farther, but it got dark and I had to give up. I asked Herb if he wanted to read my compass, but he said he knew the woods and did not need a compass. We walked quite a while and Herb said we should be out to the logging road. I insisted he read the compass. He hated to admit our direction was wrong but, in response to the compass, we turned and went the opposite direction. After lighting many matches to read the compass, we came out on our road.

The next morning Herb shot a nice buck for us. That one buck was all we saw. By the way, Herb told us he had been married just about a year ago and that he and his wife spent their first night together in one sleeping bag out in the bush.

In November of that year, 1954, our deer hunting party went back to Faunce Tower again. Deer were very scarce there. Chauncey shot a large buck and that is all we saw. We decided we would abandon this area for any further hunting.

Chauncey and I talked much about our plans to hunt moose in Ontario in the Fall of 1955, but we thought there should be some better area.

One day that Fall, as I was headed for South St. Paul with a load of livestock, I stopped at North Branch for a Dairy Queen. (This was one of my favorite stops in my years of trucking.) There was a semi-truck parked there from Port Arthur, as it was then called. I immediately went to talk with the driver. I asked him if he knew of a good area in Ontario to hunt moose. He said he was not a hunter but he would find out and let me know. I gave him my name and address. I did not hear from this man but sometime later, when I was having lunch at the Country Kitchen in Wyoming, Minnesota, he tapped me on the shoulder. I turned around and here was the trucker with whom I had talked at the Dairy Queen! He told me that the best area to hunt moose was around Geralton and Long Lac, Ontario. I bought him his lunch and thanked him again for the welcome information.

In October, the two Kelseys and I again headed for Northern Ontario. Now we could buy a license for $101.00 which permitted us to take either a bull, a cow, or a calf moose, plus the deer, bear, ducks, geese, etc. The hunting season also was much longer. When we went to buy our licenses, I hesitated to pay $101.00 for one license and then perhaps not get a moose. The man said to me in a stern voice, "Listen, fellow, it is a privilege for you to hunt these animals; do not quibble about a few dollars." I have thought about that admonition many times and he surely was right.

We went to Long Lac and inquired where to hunt. They told us to go up the Chipman Lake road. It is now called the Lukinto Lake road. We again found a gravel pit in which to set up our tent. We hunted four days and saw nothing except the place on the road in the bush where someone had shot and dressed a large moose.

While we were camped in the gravel pit, all asleep one night, about 12:00 midnight a noise awakened me. I listened carefully and again I heard the noise. I said, "Chauncey, I hear a moose calling." I went outside our tent and answered the moose the best I knew how. Again he answered. After a few exchanges of calls, the supposed moose said, "Yah, yah, go back to bed!" I felt about two inches tall, but it was a thrill anyway.

The weather was rainy and miserable on this fifth day of our hunting season. I said to the Kelseys that I wanted to go into Long Lac to call my wife to ask if I could stay in Ontario longer. Carleton Kelsey did not want to go to Long Lac so Chauncey and I went. I reached my wife by phone; she said everything was going fine and I could stay longer.

As it was raining, Chauncey and I decided to go farther up the Chipman Lake road. There was a resort by Chipman Lake so we drove into the resort.

There were three bull moose hanging in trees at the resort. Now we were excited. Farther on we saw hunters and boats by a river. We stopped at the river and there a large fellow from Ironwood, Michigan had a beautiful bull in the boat. He said, "This is my first moose hunt, but it is not going to be my last." He was very happy. They had shot additional moose. We kept on going until we came to the end of the road where there was a lumber camp. The Canadian National Railroad ran through there so we walked the tracks East until we met two hunters. They had ridden in on the train; the train would stop any place and let off the hunters, and likewise pick them up. They asked us how we got there. We told them we had driven in a car. They were very surprised that we could drive in when they had come by train.

As we walked back to the lumber camp, we saw a young man skinning a cow moose. Naturally we walked over and talked with him. We told him we had spent four days, plus this day, and had not seen a live moose. His name was Roland Malenfant and he was French. He said to us, "I finish skinning my moose and have my supper; then I show you where to hunt." The sky had cleared and the sun was about to set when he came back to us. He took us to a place that had been cut over about two years ago and showed us all the fresh moose signs. Now we were excited again. We thanked him very much for his help. I took his name and address and told him we would get in touch with him later. The road was rough and wet so it took quite a while to drive the 30 miles back to camp.

Dr. Carleton Kelsey was a small man. He was very worried about us when we were so long in returning from Long Lac. When we came into the tent, we got it straight from the shoulder from Dr. Kelsey—both barrels. We felt very bad and went to bed without any supper. The next morning Chauncey said to his father, "Papa, you are going with us hunting today; you can sit in the car." "Oh, no thank you; I will stay at the tent," was his father's reply. Chauncey said very firmly, "Papa, you are going with us!" His father then agreed.

Chauncey asked me to hook the trailer onto the car. I said, "Chauncey, that road is so rough and bad that we will have trouble. If we get a moose we will be happy to come back and get the trailer." Chauncey said, "Hook on the trailer," and I agreed. We arrived about 9:30 or 10:00 a.m. at the area Roland had shown us. Carleton Kelsey stayed by the car. Chauncey went one direction and I went another. I was following two really fresh tracks when I heard "bang, bang" and then shortly three loud whistles which was the signal that the man doing the shooting needed help. I made my way through the rough swamp and found Chauncey had shot a young bull moose. We were both happy now as Chauncey was having luck. We dressed out the bull. I immediately went back to follow my fresh tracks. I had followed the tracks just a short distance when I heard "bang, bang, bang, bang", four shots, then a pause. Then came the three loud whistles again. This time I was off on a run. I finally got to Chauncey and he was rightfully very excited. Chauncey yelled, "Look out! Be careful! He is still alive and my gun is jammed!" Chauncey was shooting a Remington 30-06 automatic.

The huge bull was leaning partly against a tree and still breathing and his eyes were open. I told Chauncey I would not shoot him in the head or neck as that head was for mounting. I gave Chauncey my Winchester 32 special to hold and I walked over to the moose and bled him. The moose was completely stunned and did not move when I bled him.

Now we had two moose. The question was how to get the two animals out as this huge bull was across a bad swamp. We went back to the car and you should have seen the smile on Carleton Kelsey's face this time. We went into the lumber camp and found the foreman. He said he would take a horse and go with us. He said this was the only horse available. I noticed the horse walked at sort of an angle, and I mentioned this fact to the foreman, whose name was Mervin Pennock. He said some one fell a tree onto the horse's back once and that unusual walk was the result.

It was very easy to get the young moose out to the trailer, but the huge moose was a different story. Mervin knew of a narrow walkway made out of short logs just for horses to cross that swamp. The horse made it across fine and we hooked onto the moose. I was helping clear the way for the horse and moose and Chauncey went ahead to cut a windfall. I saw the look on Chauncey's face when he swung the ax the first time. I asked, "Chauncey, did you chop your leg?" "Yes," he replied. I ran to him and asked, "How bad is it?" He assured me he would be all right. I gave him my handkerchiefs with which he stopped the bleeding and bandaged it tight. I wanted to take him to the car with the horse but he told me to cut a crutch for him and he could make it. He left us to go back to the car and we continued with the moose.

About half-way across that narrow wood walkway, the horse got his front feet down into the muck on one side of the walkway and the hind feet on the other side. There the horse lay with all four feet sunk into the ground. Mervin did not know what to do, and neither did I. But, we had to try something. I told Mervin to pull the horse's head toward the walkway and I would reach down into the mud and try to lift the horse's front feet up onto the walkway. I succeeded in getting the horse's front feet onto the walkway (it was not easy) and then with the horse's help, I could get one hind foot up on the walkway. We finally got the horse up on his feet and, believe me, we took it very slowly and easy the rest of the way. I walked along the horse with my shoulder against his shoulder to hold him to make sure he would not slip off again.

I was mud from head to foot when we got to the car. Chauncey and his dad had properly bandaged Chauncey's leg as they had medical equipment along. With the help of the horse, we loaded the moose into the trailer. This had been quite a day. Chauncey had shot two bull moose!! We surely were grateful to Mervin Pennock for his services and told him to tell Roland Malenfant about our good luck.

Now we were three happy hunters tonight—quite different from last night. We drove into Long Lac and went to the hospital where Chauncy had his leg cleansed and sewed up.

We finally had supper and got a motel for the night at Two Harbors. The lady that managed the motel came out and looked at our moose. She said she remembered well when a farmer used to drive a team of moose among the pine stumps in Two Harbors.

A pair of moose trained to drive around Ely, Minnesota in the early 1900's.

Left to right-Dr. Carleton Kelsey, Robert Lofgren, Dr. Chauncey Kelsey. Two bull moose hanging on the railroad water tower in Rush City, Minneaota, shot in 1955 by Dr. Chauncey Kelsey.

Two beautiful bull moose taken in the Nipigon area by Tony Rozak and his partner Gene from South St. Paul. These moose were on display one day when I came into South St. Paul with a load of livestock, 1955.

When we got to Rush City, we hung the two bull moose on the railroad water tower. That surely attracted a lot of attention as the large moose were so magnificent. Chauncey had the head mounted and still has it in his home. This was quite a season—the way I had made acquaintance with the trucker from Port Arthur, the many days of hunting and seeing nothing, and then all of a sudden Chauncey had two bulls.

Cambridge Star Photo

Six Hunters Bag Twelve Deer in Eastern Wyoming . . .

In less than a day and a half of hunting in eastern Wyoming, these hunters bagged the twelve deer shown above, the largest of which, shot by Ruben Krueger, weighed 225 pounds dressed. Those in the party, from left to right, were Henry Krueger, Star Prairie, Wis., Julius Miller, Weber, Carver Johnston, Glenwood City, Wis., Carl Krueger, Rueben Krueger, both of Cambridge, and Paul Lofgren of Harris.

My Uncle Paul Lofgren is the gentleman on the far right, many years ago.

Back to deer hunting again in the Fall of 1955, following our moose hunting trip. We gave up going to Northern Minnesota and decided to go east of Hinckley again. My brother shot a doe at a long distance. I stepped off the length of the shot and it was about 220 yards. As Carl was dressing the doe, a buck was following her track. Carl picked up his rifle and shot the buck. As I said before, he is a better "shot" than I am. I told him if I lived to be a thousand years old, I could not hit a deer that far away.

The next day I was on a ridge and a doe came out across an open meadow. I was shooting my Winchester 32 special so I thought I have nothing to

lose, so I emptied my gun (seven shots). The doe disappeared into the willows. We had nice snow so I went down to check her tracks. Sure enough—I had hit her. I trailed her 3½ miles before I got her. I had hit her three times out of the seven tries, but the bullets were so well spent they did not do much damage.

I went back to step off the distance; it was about 265 yards. I told my brother that had been a short 1,000 years!

As I said, the two bull moose hanging on the tree in Rush City in the Fall of 1955 had attracted a lot of attention, so now there were other men wanting to go with us moose hunting in 1956. It is difficult to have too large a group when you go hunting. There would be too much equipment to pack along with several hunters, so we limited our party to three additional men. The extra men were Ralph and Adam Yocum of Hinckley and Ted Otterkill of Saint Paul.

In 1956 we went up to the town of Hearst, Ontario to meet Roland Malenfant. He and a friend were out hunting and had shot a bull and a cow moose. The cow ran out into the lake and died. This lake was way out in the wilderness. There was no way to get a canoe to the lake so they had to leave the cow in the lake for the night. The next day Roland took our group of hunters out to an area he thought they should hunt while he, his brother and friend Andy Hardy, and I were going to take two horses from the lumber camp nearby to go after the two moose they had shot.

As we came by the trail Ted Otterkill was on, Ted was there and was excited and said he "had his tag on a moose," meaning he had wounded a moose, but he needed help trailing it. I immediately went to help Ted. Shortly, Roland called that he saw the moose on another old logging road. I could run faster than Ted, so Ted told me to get the moose if I could. As I came to the bend in the trail, I could see the young bull running straight away from me, so I stopped, and from behind took good aim right between the bull's ears and fired. The moose dropped in his tracks. We dressed him out and once again our group took the horses and headed for the lake.

After crossing much swamp and lake shore, we finally got to the moose, but how to get the moose out of the lake?? We cut small tamarack trees and tied them together, end to end, and kept pushing them out in the water towards the cow moose. We had tied a rope with spikes sticking out to the front end of the tree line. Finally we hooked the spikes into the cow's hide and were able to drag her to shore.

Now it was getting late in the afternoon and starting to rain. We started through the swampy woods which was very rough-going for the horses as they would sink down deep many times. We would have to stop to let them rest. The rain kept falling and darkness was coming. Pretty soon one horse sank down very deep in the soft soil, stretched out and laid flat. Roland was French and talked rather broken English. He said about the horse, "He is dead; he is finished." I had driven horses all my life so I thought I would see what I could do. It was so dark you could not see your hand in front of you, but I put my ear to the horse's chest and I could hear his heart beat, so I knew he

was alive. I talked to the horse and petted him, and he moved. Then I dug muck out from around his feet with my hands. After a while I gave him a good slap and said, "Get up boy!" Up he jumped!! Roland was very happy as he had worried about what his boss would say if the horse had died. We found a fairly solid spot of ground, tied the horses to two trees and decided to wait for morning.

Now we were wet and hungry and Roland was not sure which way to go in the dark as we had no light by which to read his compass. I told him we had whistles and we used them to communicate with each other. We had our own signals. One whistle indicated location. Two whistles meant, "Stay where you are, I will be over to you." Three whistles meant, "Come to me; I need help." I thought maybe some of our group may be waiting out on the logging road and might hear us if we whistled. I said it was worth a try. I whistled once loudly and we waited. Faintly we heard one whistle in reply. I answered with one whistle. They answered with one whistle, and we started making our way in their direction.

Soon we could smell smoke. Then we could see a fire. When we got to the fire, here were Ralph and Adam Yocum. They were lost and were planning to spend the night in the woods. They were very happy to see us. In the light of the fire, Roland was able to read the compass and get his bearings. We made our way out to the logging road. I will never forget Andy Hardy. He was a very short little man and quite excitable. Many times, while walking in the dark on this logging road, he would trip and fall face forward into a puddle of water and mud. We were some mess when we reached camp about 11:00 p.m. The others had gone to bed but got up and helped us make some supper.

Pulling out our moose on our hunting trip in Ontario in 1956 with Roland Malenfant.

Our hunting group in 1956. Left to right-Dr. Chauncey Kelsey, Adam Yocum, Ted Otterkill, Ralph Yocum, Dr. Carleton Kelsey.

The next morning we took two burlap sacks and put oats in the bottoms and then filled the sacks with hay. We started out to find the two horses. The horses really talked to us in their language when we found them! They were hungry too. We finally pulled the two moose with the horses out to the camp. We got Ted's moose also. That is really working for your game. Since two of the moose belonged to Roland Malenfant, we had only Ted Otterkill's moose to show for our hunt. We will not forget the hard work nor the many experiences involved.

Our 1956 deer hunting did not amount to much either as deer seemed to be getting more scarce. We tried different areas, but did not have any luck.

Now we will talk about something far different from hunting. On May 21, 1957, a terrible tornado came from the south damaging and destroying many buildings on its way, including almost all of the buildings on our farm.

The awesome tornado of May 21, 1957. This picture was taken by Mildred Swanson. She was about one and one-half miles away from the tornado.

The truck garage which withstood the tornado of May 21, 1957.

What was left of our corn crib following the tornado.

Our home after the tornado, before any clean-up.

Wreckage of our silo in the tornado of 1957. The silo shed had a cement roof on it, and that was difficult to move without much equipment at that time.

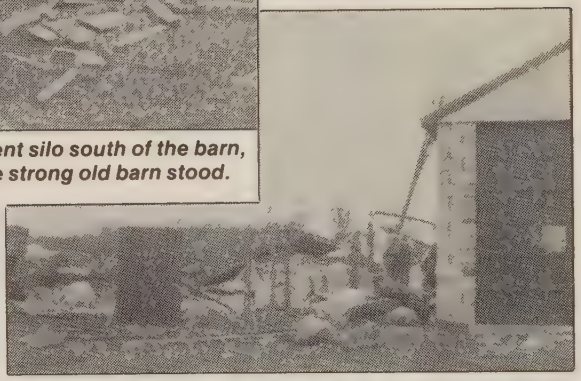
Two cute little lambs weathered the storm. They were David and Joanne's pets, and pets they were!

After the tornado of 1957. There was a machine shed, corn crib and chicken house all in a row, and all the buildings blew toward and into the house.

Our home, and one of our cattle trucks tipped upside down.

The trees were uprooted, but the good old barn weathered the storm.

There was a 14 x 32 ½ foot cement silo south of the barn, and you see what is left of it. The strong old barn stood.



The granary was full of oats, and you see how it looks. Our cement block truck garage, however, weathered the storm.

My "old faithful" 1950 Chevrolet cab-over-engine cattle truck. This truck, standing on the north side of the barn, was swept across the yard, taking the electricity pole down, and was turned upside down. The wrecker turned this truck right side up and, after about a week, I stepped on the starter and it "popped" right off.

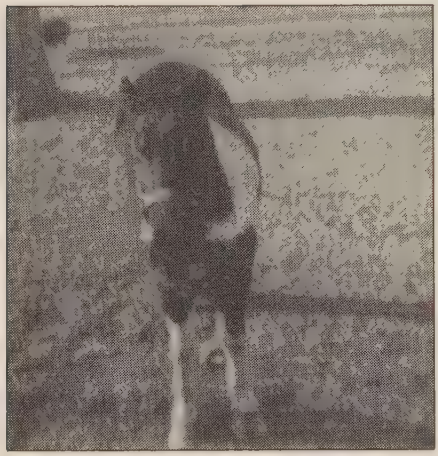
Our former home, amidst the cleanup.

Our home after the yard was cleaned up.

Our new home built in 1957.

We had ten buildings on the place and of those ten buildings only the barn and truck garage were left after the tornado went through. There was no end to the work of cleaning up. It was a tremendous expense to rebuild, so I did not have much time to think about hunting nor did I think I could afford it.

A great many people came to view the wreckage of our farm buildings caused by the tornado. We were told by many people that they had seen our shetland pony running all over the area. They said he just kept running. We were all very busy with all the extra work necessitated by the tornado damage, so no one had time to think about our pony. Day after day went by without seeing a trace of him.



Our pony 'Black Beauty' who survived the tornado.

Our son David sitting on the pony and our daughter Joanne sitting on the steps, 1957.

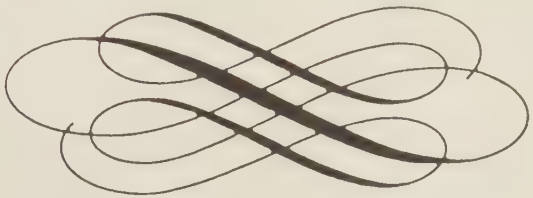
It was on a Saturday almost two weeks later, while we were having breakfast, that I told my family that we must look for the pony **today.** I had a very strong feeling we must find him. David was plowing on the south end of our farm and I was going to disc what he had plowed. (At this time, David was almost 12 years of age and Joanne had just turned 10.) I told Joanne to come down to this field in about an hour, because by that time I would have caught up with discing as far as David had plowed.

Joanne came to the field and we were going to look in our neighbor Thompsons' woods for our pony. I asked Joanne to go in the woods a ways to my right. I crossed the fence and, just like it was meant to be, I walked straight to our pony!

I learned afterwards some neighbor children had caught the pony the day of the tornado and were leading him to our home place when he got away from them. He had a small, long rope tied around his neck. This rope was all tangled in the trees and he had eaten everything he could reach, which was not very much. We had received quite a bit of rain so, at least, he had some moisture. His head was nanging low to the ground and he did not want to

move. We untangled him from the trees, led him home and gave him water and oats and hay, small amounts at first. Pretty soon he started to perk up.

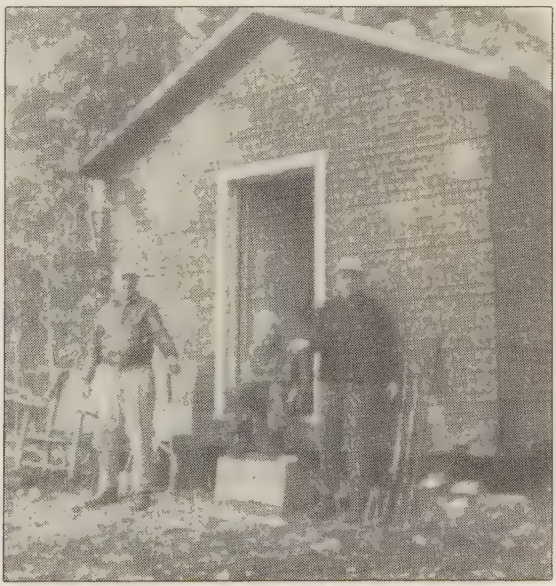
I have always been unusually fond of shetland ponies as I never had one of my own. We bought this one in 1949, when he was six months old, so he was still a young pony. I had to put him to sleep in 1971 because his feet were so crooked. I know I shall never forget the story of our pony.



When Fall arrived, the hunting fever was there again. Our new house was being built and the future for us was looking better, so I decided to go hunting.

Chauncey, his father, Ted Otterkill and I decided to go to Roland Malenfant's lumber camp again. Roland had pulled a cabin to the shore of a lake, so we really had a comfortable place away from home. Again, moose were very hard to find. Ted was the only one of the group to get a glimpse of a moose. It was a long trip home with nothing in the trailer.

The Roland Malenfant family in Hearst, Ontario in 1957.



Left to right-Ted Otterkill, who had caught a fish; Dr. Carleton Kelsey, seated in the doorway of our cabin; and Dr. Chauncey Kelsey. Our moose hunting trip of 1957.

As usual, our deer hunting group went out in the Fall of 1957. The first weekend we went East of Hinckley and my brother shot a fawn. The second weekend, my brother and I went North of Duxberry and I shot a beautiful large buck with a perfect rack. He weighed 227 pounds. I had the head mounted and it is now on display in my home.

Two pictures of my buck taken in 1957.

Returning from our hunting trip in 1957. My daughter Joanne and my son David with me and my large buck. New home being built.

In 1958 we headed for the Hearst, Canada area again. Ted could not go with us on account of some legal matters that needed his attention, so Ralph Yocum and Oscar Nyberg of Hinckley asked to go with us. We went to Roland's camp again. He was now the foreman of the lumber camp. We hunted for four days and never saw a fresh track.

I decided to go North of the camp where I found a small trail through the bush. Prior to our going hunting this Fall, I had hurt my knee while loading a 610 pound sow at home. The knee gave me a great deal of pain when I walked a lot. I got up on a windfall and sat while I was eating a sandwich. I looked to the North on this trail, and pretty soon a dark brown animal appeared. I knew it was a long-shot attempt, but I tried anyway. I fired and the animal reared up and went back the way he had come. I tried to run to the spot, but my knee gave out and I had to hobble the best I could. There was a good trail of blood to follow and I soon found him – a nice young bull moose. I had shot him right under the backbone and cut off the large artery. Roland came with a small Caterpillar and hauled the moose out for me. That was a thrilling experience – my spying the moose way down the trail and getting him.

Roland Malenfant with his caterpillar in the bush.

Chauncey, his father and I went home, but Ralph Yocum and Oscar Nyberg stayed another week, but still came home empty-handed.

Now came the 1958 deer season. We remodeled the cattle truck to accommodate hunters rather than livestock. We traveled and lived in the truck as we went East of Sandstone to Kingsdale to hunt. As usual, my brother got the first deer – a fawn. Again, I was sitting alone eating a sandwich when I spied a doe behind me. She looked at me like she wanted my sandwich, and I looked at her, but I had no chance to shoot. Finally the doe started to trot, so I thought I would see how fast I could draw. I got in one shot and of course the doe dis-

appeared. Just then my brother, Bert Ovitt and Loring Nelson came through the woods. I told them I had just shot at a deer. They had heard the shot. Loring went his way and we were going to look for any blood sign. I spied a small birch tree with a bullet hole in it. Then Bert spied blood. Loring called, "Your doe is over here." The bullet had gone through the tree, then through the deer's artery under the backbone, the same as had happened with the moose I had shot earlier. That was quite a coincidence—the way we all had a hand in getting this one doe.

The next weekend, Bert Ovitt and I returned to the same area. I was sitting in the same area, eating a sandwich as usual, when a buck, doe and fawn came leaping through the brush. I shot once and missed. I thought, "This will never do." With my second shot, the buck went down. With the third shot, the buck fawn went down. The fourth shot just grazed the doe. Anyway, I had pretty good deer hunting in 1958.

In 1959 we had another newcomer for our moose hunting trip—Dr. Ralph Olson. We were six actual hunters plus Chauncey's father. The group consisted of Dr. Chauncey Kelsey, Dr. Carleton Kelsey, Dr. Ralph Olson and Ted Otterkill of Saint Paul; Ralph Yocum and Oscar Nyberg from Hinckley, and me. Chauncey had borrowed a small foreign-made four wheel drive vehicle and pulled a trailer behind. We also had a car and a pickup truck.

We went to Roland's lumber camp again. The trail where I had shot my moose in 1958 was now actually a road that led right up to the Kabina River. I had not known there was a river up there. Roland said there should be good hunting around the river.

The first morning Chauncey, Ted and I went across the river to a small lake. Ted again was lucky and got a nice bull moose. Ted wanted to quarter the moose and carry it out that way. It was Ted's moose, so his choice changed any plan of hanging up that one in Rush City.

Ralph and Oscar went along the river upstream. Ralph shot a cow moose across the river. They also quartered that one, loaded it into a boat and brought it down the river to camp.

Dr. Ralph Olson, who had a heart condition, stayed close to camp. He saw an Indian guide bring some hunters and moose up the river. He asked the Indian (whose name was Alex Stevens) if we could hire him to take us down the river. The Indian guide agreed to do so. After noon, Alex, Chauncey, Ralph, Oscar and I headed down the river in Alex's canoe with one boat towed behind. We did not have a motor for the second boat. The river was full of large rocks. None of us had any experience in running a boat among the rocks so we decided to let Alex do the driving. He was just super!! We continued down the river until the sun was about to set. Then we set up camp and had supper. Oscar said he would wash the dishes and watch around the camp.

Alex, Chauncey, Ralph and I went downstream in the boat. Alex dropped Ralph off where there were good signs of moose. The rest of us continued on the river. Pretty soon Alex said, "Moose!" Up on the river bank we could see a dark spot in the brush, and then another dark spot. When we thought we were sufficiently close, we pulled up to shore. I told Chauncey, "You take the left one and I will take the right one." It was difficult shooting as we could not see much of them. I shot several times and I saw one drop for sure. Then I saw the other animal running through the thick brush. I emptied my gun at it. It ran up to the edge of the woods and stopped for a brief time.

Robert Lofgren carrying a moose head out of the brush in 1959.

Our hunting group carrying moose out of the woods in 1959.

I had not paid much attention to Chauncey's shooting, so I told him, "Take that one up there. My gun is empty." Chauncey answered, "I can't. My gun is jammed." He was shooting his same 30-06 Remington automatic. I reloaded my gun. We found the cow moose that had dropped and Chauncey said he would start dressing it while Alex and I went to look for the calf. It was now getting dark. We found blood and, after trailing it a short way, I shot the calf. We dressed both the cow and the calf moose and left them for the night. We picked up Ralph. I guess he liked to "rib" me. When we told Ralph of our luck, he said, "No one can aim and shoot that fast!" I told him, "We got two of them, didn't we?" It could not be too bad.

We did not have enough canoes or boats to haul all our hunting gear so Alex, Chauncey and I made one trip up the river with the cow. When we got back to camp, Dr. Ralph Olson and Ted Otterkill had shot another large bull on an island in the river. They had stood by camp and used their 30-06s to shoot the bull at extremely long range.

Left to right—Ralph Yocum, Dr. Chauncey Kelsey and Roland Malenfant on our moose hunting expedition in 1959.

Early the next morning, Alex and I headed down river again to pick up the other moose and to see how Oscar and Ralph were doing. When we got down to their tent, we found them all smiles. While they were washing the dishes the evening before, a large bull moose stood looking at them from across the river. Between Oscar and Ralph, they shot our sixth and final moose for the season. We surely were a happy group—six hunters and six moose. We loaded the bull and the calf moose and our equipment and headed up river. We reached the main camp late in the afternoon. After much labor, we had everything loaded and were ready to make the trip home.

A moose that our hunting group shot in 1959.

Robert Lofgren and his calf moose in 1959.

Oscar Nyberg of Hinckley, Minnesota hunted with us. Oscar's bull moose.

Oscar Nyberg and Ralph Yocum of Hinckley, and Alex Stevens, with their moose in 1959.

We paid Alex for his service. We all agreed he had been a very good guide and asked for his services for the next year.

Most of the moose we shot on this trip were quartered so we decided not to hang any moose in Rush City or elsewhere for picture-taking. But, we did feel we had found a wonderful hunting area for at least a few years in the future.

Later in 1959, our same deer hunting group went out hunting around our home area near Rush City but, as usual, we did not get anything. The last Sunday of the season, Perry Peterson and his son Jeff and I went back to Kingsdale. About 3 p.m. I heard something behind me. When I looked around, three deer bolted through the brush. I got in one shot and hit one. I trailed that deer until 4:40 p.m. but had to give up the search as it was getting dark and I knew I was many miles from camp. I felt very bad to let a wounded deer get away from me.

As the 1960 moose season drew close, Chauncey and I made many plans for the river trip. We arranged for small canoes, brought motors along, etc. so we would be able to carry all our equipment, plus moose, if we were lucky again.

In the summer of 1960, a man from Rush City by the name of Pete Carlson asked me if he could go with me moose hunting. We had decided to cut down the size of the group, but I told Pete Carlson that if I could hire him to build a new livestock van for my new truck, he could go with me. He quickly agreed.

About the middle of September, we loaded a boat on my car and three canoes on a trailer. We filled a station wagon with supplies. We headed for the

Kabina River again. Money was always scarce for me, so I insisted we get along with the vehicles we had. It would have been very nice to have had a four-wheel drive pickup, but that was considered too expensive, and used four-wheel drive trucks were very scarce.

This year the group consisted of Carleton Kelsey, Chauncey Kelsey, and Ted Otterkill (all from Saint Paul); Pete Carlson and I from Rush City. We picked up Alex Stevens, our guide, at Calstock and drove to the Kabina River. It was about 600 miles from Rush City to where we put the boat into the water. Alex loaded his canoe, which was quite large, and towed our boat behind plus a canoe tied alongside of his canoe. It was very difficult for him to maneuver that load, but he did very well. We would help him through the shallow rapids and rocks.

Chauncey and I had two canoes tied together. Chauncey was the driver. We were very inexperienced. At times we were very frightened of overturning. After traveling over 40 miles down the Kabina River, we set up camp on the Nagagami River. It was almost dark by now. We had not seen a single moose, so we were questioning our luck.

We made supper. After eating, Alex asked if anyone brought anything along to patch a canoe as his canoe was leaking quite badly. No one had thought of that. Alex asked me to carry the lantern and he found a spruce tree with a ball of pitch on it. He took a burning stick out of the fire and held the pitch over the hole in the canoe, blew on the fire until the fire melted the pitch, and thus sealed the hole. This patch held for the entire trip.

The next morning we were up early getting ready for the first day of hunting season. Chauncey came to me and told me he was sick and could not go with us. I felt very bad for him as I knew he was disappointed. His father was with him. Both being doctors, I did not think it would be of any help for me to stay in camp also.

Alex and Ted went ahead in one canoe on the river. Pete and I followed later in the boat. We were sitting on the river bank watching and eating our lunch when we saw Alex and Ted coming back toward us. Ted was very excited. I asked him what he had shot. He said he had shot an enormous moose, "Too big! Too big! We cannot get it out of the river."

Pete and I went with Alex and Ted quickly. Between the four of us, we managed to get the moose up on the bank and dress it out. It was really a beautiful animal. Alex and Ted said, "Now we will have to cut it into at least six sections." I begged them to try to load it whole. They claimed that would be impossible, so I had to give in to their wish.

We were careful to save the head and shoulders for mounting. We finally got all the pieces into the canoe and headed back toward camp. By this time it was getting dark. When we reached the tent, Chauncey came to meet us. He was feeling better and asked us how our luck had been. I told him Ted had got a beauty. "Well," Chauncey said, "We got two of them." Chauncey told us that a

Ted Otterkill's moose head in the museum at Bagley, Minnesota.

Two bucks with locked antlers in the museum at Bagley, Minnesota.

large bull, a young bull and a young cow had come out across the river from the tent. Chauncey said he kept on shooting at them with his 30-06 until he had the two young ones, but the bull got away. That was three moose for four of us the first day!! After a good supper, we went to bed and slept well.

Ted Otterkill was very excited and said he had lost his knife and felt really bad about that as the knife had been a gift from Norway. We looked and looked and looked for it; finally we gave up. That night Ted found the knife in his back pocket!!!

The next morning, Pete, Alex and I again headed up the Nagagami River. There were four rivers that came together in this area, but we stayed on the Nagagami. We had not gone very far when we saw a large cow moose crossing the river. When she was on the river bank, we got her, and that made the fourth moose for us. Again we had filled out. At first we just could not believe it! Again I had to give in to quartering the cow.

We got back to camp about noon. In the afternoon we decided to load up everything and be ready to travel toward the landing the next morning, so we took the two small canoes across the river to where the two young moose were dressed out. The two doctors had done a beautiful job of dressing them out.

Alex was going to start cutting up these two small moose also, but Chauncey and I stood firm and insisted we would take the cross pieces out of the canoe and we could roll the moose in whole. After much arguing, they agreed to try it. It was very simple. Now we proved the moose could be hauled whole in a canoe.

We had a great many problems getting up the river due to not enough motors and inexperienced drivers. Finally, we were at the landing and again we loaded everything for the trip home.

When we arrived at Rush City, we displayed the two young moose, also the trophy head. Ted was really sorry that he could not show the whole magnificent moose he had taken. His bull's antlers measured 59 inches and was qualified to be registered in the Boone & Crocket Club. The head is on display in the museum at Bagley, Minnesota, with a card underneath which reads, *"Shot by Ted Otterkill."*

In November 1960, our deer hunting group took two cattle trucks which we had fixed up for our use—one truck for cooking and eating and one for sleeping. We went back to Kingsdale to hunt.

Carl got his usual fawn right away. I made a simple tree stand on a ridge and was waiting for some deer to appear when I spied a buck running through the tag alders. I did not have a chance to shoot through the thick brush so I picked out an opening ahead. When I saw the deer's antlers, I pulled the trigger. The buck really took off then and was very accommodating. He came up over the ridge and I finally brought him down. He was a large buck and his neck was really swollen. My first shot had gone through the back part of the hind quarters.

It was about 3 p.m. when I started to drag the deer toward camp. I was alone and the deer really was heavy so the dragging went slow. Soon it was dark and I did not know just how far it was back to camp. Again, I took out my whistle and signaled. No answer. Then I fired three shots and after a brief silence came my answer—one shot. After another exchange of shots, and then whistling, two of the group met me with a light so we could blaze a trail out. We left the deer for the night and went back in the morning. It took three of us quite a while to get the deer out. That one deer was about all we saw and we had to leave the woods Sunday evening.

The next Sunday, Carl and I drove up to Kingsdale just for the day. When I left home that day, my little daughter Joanne asked me not to shoot a doe or fawn as they want to be together for the winter. I was up in a tree when a doe and two fawns came by. I remembered Joey's words so I never fired a shot.

I soon came across my brother in the woods. I told him what I had seen. I then asked him how he had done. "Pretty good," he said. He had got a nice buck. He had seen a hunter coming from his left and then saw the buck sneaking through the brush. Carl fired and the buck dropped, so he set his gun against a tree and was going to walk up to bleed the buck. The buck jumped up and got his antlers around a small tree. Carl grabbed his gun again and shot the buck in the neck. The other hunter was a neighbor (Loring Nelson) whom we had seen in the woods many times before.

Carl and I dragged the buck out over beaver dams and swamp. We were very thirsty when we got to the car and I shall never forget how good that cold water tasted.

During the summer of 1961, Chauncey Kelsey, Ted Otterkill and I discussed plans for our moose hunt in the Fall. We needed larger canoes and more motors and a better vehicle in which to transport our equipment. Ted had purchased a one-ton Chevrolet truck for use in his plastering business and he thought they could spare that for our trip.

Chauncey had ridden in one of two large canoes when he was a Boy Scout. These canoes were 24 feet long and were stored somewhere West of Duluth. Chauncey wrote to the Scoutmaster and learned that we could buy them for $35 each. I bought one canoe and Chauncey bought the other. Pete Carlson put new fiberglass on mine and Chauncey had the same work done on his canoe in Saint Paul. Now we had two large canoes. Ted had a 5½ horse motor and Chauncey had a 5½ horse motor. Now things were looking better.

We had another new hunter, Art Ryan of Saint Paul, who wanted to go with us, so our group consisted of six—the two Kelseys, Ted Otterkill and Art Ryan of Saint Paul; and Pete Carlson and me from Rush City. Dr. Carleton Kelsey was now close to 80 years old but still enjoyed going with us and taking pictures.

We left on our moose hunting trip about the middle of September. When we were driving North of Grand Marais, we saw a young bull moose running

alongside of the road. That was the first moose we had seen on the road during all our trips to and from Canada to hunt moose.

We picked up our guide, Alex Stevens, in Calstock and drove North to Roland Malenfant's lumber camp. By then it had snowed four to six inches and it was still snowing hard. No one felt like loading the canoes and traveling down the river in that weather, so Roland invited us to stay in his house until the next day.

The next day the weather was better. Roland decided to go with us on the hunt. He had a really large metal canoe and a good motor. Alex also had a large canoe and motor so now we were sure we should have enough equipment.

The river was very high so the traveling was much easier not having to dodge so many rocks. Alex ran his canoe; Roland ran his, and Chauncey and I each ran our own. We stayed right behind each other with Alex leading the way.

Again it was a long journey down to where we were going to camp. As I said before, it was 40 miles on the river to where we camped in 1960, and now in 1961 Alex said we would go another 15 miles up the Nagagomi River to make camp. It was dark at the time we found a spot to pitch our tents. We finally got set up and made supper and then went to bed. I slept alone in a little pup tent I had bought. It snowed heavily through the night and my tent was almost covered with snow. It was not very pleasant to crawl out and finish dressing in the outdoors!

We had a good breakfast, then decided to go in two groups only to save on gas as it was a problem to take sufficient gas along with us to make the return trip to the landing. We would hide a barrel of gas in the bush on the way down. I lit one of our old fashioned kerosene lanterns and hung it in a tree by the tent so we could surely find the tent if we came back in the dark.

As we started on the river, the two Kelseys, Ted, Art and Roland decided to go one way on the Nagagomi; Alex, Pete and I would go the other direction. Our group traveled on and on, not seeing anything. The water was rising steadily in the river. Rain started falling. Soon, first Pete, and then I, spied the legs of a moose in the thick brush. We fired at it but when we got out of our canoe and tried to find the moose again on the land, we could not see it and could not find any sign that we had hit it. Alex was by the canoe and called to us, "Moose, moose!" We ran down to the canoe and there across the river was a bull moose looking at us. By then it was raining quite hard. Pete and I started to shoot. I could see the bullets spraying the rain drops and I could see we were right on target, but of course the moose disappeared.

We took the canoe across the river, got out of the canoe and looked for signs of having hit the moose. Pete and Alex said they had the trail, so I kept a distance to their right. After some time, I saw a moose running almost straight away from me. I was desperate now so I just fired one shot after the other. The moose disappeared. I ran over to where I had last seen him. I found him lying

on the ground a short way ahead. I will never know if that was the moose we had already shot at, or, if it was another moose, as Alex and Pete seemed to have lost the trail of the first moose we shot at.

We dressed out the moose and decided to let it lay where it was until the next day as it was getting late. After traveling a short distance in the canoe on the river, I spied a black bear on the bank. Pete and I both shot at the bear and it fell into the river, got up on the bank again, and ran into the bush. I thought we had him so I did not shoot again. When we got to the spot where the bear had been, I jumped out of the canoe and ran into the bush. Alex screamed, "Look out! Look out! He will kill you." I had my 32 special with me so I felt safe to go after the bear. After a short way, I saw the bear trying to run and this time I got him. We dressed him out and loaded him into a canoe and then started for camp in earnest. It seemed like we traveled forever in the dark before we saw the welcome light from the old kerosene lantern in the tree. This was "home" for us for a while.

The other group was in camp and had supper ready. They also had got one bull moose so we were very well satisfied. The next morning we crawled out of our tents to find more snow. Most of the snow from the prior snowfall had melted, but now we had fresh snow for better tracking. In our two canoes we all started upstream on the Nagagomi River. After about two miles we spotted a large bull moose in the bush on the river bank. I had said we should try to get as close to the moose as possible before shooting so we would be sure to get him.

We were still quite a distance from the moose when one of the group lost his patience and started shooting at the moose. We all shot and, of course, the moose disappeared. At that time, I was the youngest of the group, so I ran through the bush and picked up his trail. There was very little or no blood, but I could easily follow his track. About one-half mile from the river, I saw the moose lying down. I went closer to him, thinking he must be quite badly wounded since he was lying down. In a split second he was up and charging me, pointing all those points on his rack directly at me! My heart jumped into my throat, but I quickly raised my 32 and fired right between his eyes. When I knew he was down for good, I examined him to see where he was hit. He had been hit only once in the front leg. Now we had a large bull moose about one-half mile from the river and we wanted him home in one piece.

By then the rest of the group had joined us and we wondered what to do. We were five hunters and two guides, a total of seven. I said we would go to the canoe, get ropes, and then pretend we were horses. I put three cross sticks on the ropes with two men on each cross stick. I told Ted he could be the lead horse. It went real good for the seven man-horses to drag the moose to the river. We did not see any more moose that day, so finally headed back to camp for supper.

The next morning the weather was better with a little more sunlight. Ted usually did most of the cooking with the rest of us helping with dishes and other chores.

The third day of this trip, Roland, Ted, Ryan and Chauncey went up the Nagagomi River ahead of Alex, Pete and me. When we caught up with their canoe, they were all up in the bush along the river. I asked them if they got anything. Ted answered, "Yes, we got a little calf—just a little one." I asked him, "Why did you shoot a little calf?" By that time he was laughing and the three of us were almost up to them. Here, the "little calf" was a huge black bull moose, the largest one we had shot thus far that year. We dressed him out and he was huge.

We more or less rolled him down the bank to the canoe. We all worked together and rolled him into my 21-foot canoe in one piece. Now we needed another canoe. Roland and Chauncey volunteered to go back to the camp for another canoe. When they arrived back at the camp for the additional canoe, Dr. Carleton Kelsey, who usually stayed in camp, decided to return with Roland and Chauncey to take pictures. On their way back to us, they spotted a young bull on the bank and managed to sneak up and get him while Dr. Carleton Kelsey took pictures. Dr. Kelsey took some very good movie pictures.

Now we were filled out and must think about getting everything loaded into the canoes for the 55-mile trip back to the landing. We had loaded the large black bull into my 21-foot canoe; we loaded the second largest moose into Chauncey's 24-foot canoe; we loaded the third largest bull into the Indian's canoe and the last two (the smallest of the group) into Roland's large metal canoe. We divided all of the camping equipment into the four canoes and headed for the old abandoned Hudson Bay Trading Post which was where the four rivers came together. There we would spend the night in the old building which was on a very high bank.

The next morning Dr. Carleton Kelsey awakened us all very early as he was anxious to get home. We had a good breakfast, then went down to the river to get the motors ready for the remaining 40 miles of the trip to the landing. The dressed moose and canoes were all frosty and it was still quite dark, but we started out anyway. The river was very high. The Indians would say, "The river is fat." There was still the danger of large rocks just under the surface of the water, it being impossible to see them. Alex led the way in his canoe, then Chauncey in his, I next, and then Roland with two moose, four men and some equipment bringing up the rear with his canoe. I had a very heavy load also as the moose I was carrying in my canoe weighed an even thousand pounds on the Interstate Lumber scale at Rush City. The trip went very well. We would stop a few times on the river for some lunch as one gets hungry traveling on the water.

Towards evening, I got a little off course and all of a sudden my canoe stopped dead. I knew I had run up on a large rock but I did not know what to do. Shortly the canoe started to slowly turn around and it slid off the rock going downstream. I was really relieved and immediately got in line behind Chauncey. Alex wanted to stop to make camp for the night as it was getting dark and the going was very strenuous, but the men from Saint Paul insisted we keep

going. Pete Carlson was riding in the front of Alex's canoe. He lit the gas lantern and held it by his feet to keep warm. Soon I noticed that Roland in his canoe was not behind me, but I did not dare to stop as I must follow Chauncey very closely. I must say I was frightened to be traveling this deep river in the dark but decided to do my best. Finally we reached the landing and tied our loaded canoes just as they were for the night.

Now we were all worried about Roland with the two moose and four men. Pretty soon we could hear the welcome sound of a motor. They pulled up alongside of us. Now we were all safe at the landing. They had trouble with the bracket holding the motor. Roland had used his hatchet and made two almost perfect boards from two pieces of wood and was able to fasten the motor securely. We all spent the night at Roland's house at the lumber camp. When I crawled into my sleeping bag, I thought, "What a perfect hunting trip." Now we would hang these five bulls and the bear in Rush City and even top the picture of the moose in Forest Lake in 1939!!

When we unloaded the canoes, we would turn them over to empty water, etc., and examine the bottoms. We looked at the bottom of my canoe and the rock, upon which my canoe had landed, had **almost** broken a hole through the canoe. Now I know I had a reason to be frightened!

It was a large job to get everything loaded into the truck and other vehicles; finally we finished. We paid the guides and bid them farewell and assured them this would without a doubt be the hunting trip of our lifetimes. I have been in contact with these two men ever since. I talked with Roland Malenfant by phone on April 15, 1984. He said moose are very scarce, but there are still a few around.

It was late afternoon before we were ready to leave camp and it was 600-plus miles home to Rush City, so we decided to stay in Long Lac overnight. We kept on the move the next day as we were anxious to get the moose hung up in Rush City and get some pictures.

When we did get home, I brought a tractor and loader to Rush City. We set up a cross piece, and about one-half hour before sunset we had the moose hung for display. The people were coming by the scores to view the moose, so our hunters from Saint Paul decided to leave their moose also hang until the next day. Teachers in the area brought their classes to see the moose the next day.

About noon the next day, everything was cleared away except the memories. I must say they are truly some great memories.

The following is an article, published with the above picture, in *The Rush City Post* of October 13, 1961.

"MOOSE HUNTERS BRING BACK TONS

Tuesday evening, September 26, Dr. Carleton G. Kelsey of Hinckley, Dr. Chauncey M. Kelsey, Ted Otterkill and Art Ryan of St. Paul,

and Pete Carlson and Robert Lofgren of Rush City left to hunt moose in northeastern Ontario.

The group returned with quite a bag – five bull moose and a black bear.

One of the finest bags of game seen in this area was shown to the public Thursday afternoon when these men returned from a moose hunting trip in Canada. Posing in front of their prizes are (l to r) Dr. C.M. Kelsey, St. Paul; Pete Carlson, Rush City; Art Ryan, St. Paul; Robert Lofgren, Rush City; and Ted Otterkill, St. Paul. The trips picture-taking member, Dr. C.G. Kelsey of Hinckley, was absent.

On their way north, past Grand Marais, a young bull moose tried to outrun their car, which gave the hunters a thrill.

After they crossed the border into Canada, it began to rain. Rain fell all day Wednesday and by Thursday morning the ground was covered with about four inches of snow.

It kept snowing most of the day, which delayed the trip down river until Friday.

About 5 p.m. Friday, the group had made the 55-mile trip down river and was setting up camp at the river's edge.

The season opened Saturday morning, and again it rained all day. By evening, the hunters had gotten two bull moose and were fortunate in getting pictures of one being shot.

Sunday morning when the men crawled out of the tent they again found about four inches of snow.

About noon that day another large bull moose was shot. Towards evening Pete Carlson and Robert Lofgren bagged a black bear.

Dr. Carleton G. Kelsey, who is 81 years of age, got pictures of another moose being shot.

This is one of the moose heads from our 1961 hunting trip.

The group loaded their prizes into canoes and began the trip back up river. They traveled as far as the old Hudson Bay Trading Post which was abandoned 15 years ago. Here they spent the night in one of the buildings.

After 15 hours on the river Tuesday, they reached the landing where the moose were loaded onto the truck, and they prepared for the long drive home.

They arrived home Tuesday afternoon, hanging their catches on display in the Rush City park. The news attracted a large crowd.

Because these were all large bull moose and they were able to transport them whole, the group agreed this was an outstanding trip.

Although he has been out several times in past years, Lofgren said this trip satisfied a long-time ambition. When he was 19 years old, he saw five bull moose on display in Forest Lake. It took this trip to duplicate it."

For the 1961 deer season, Ted Otterkill invited us to come up to his cabin at Bagley to hunt. We had a very nice trailer house in which we could stay. The first morning, I got a two-point buck and in the afternoon I shot a buck fawn while he was eating acorns. He went right down. When I reached him, he was lying square on his back with the four legs raised upward. I had never seen a deer drop like that. There were just my brother, Chauncey and I in our hunting party that year. Ted's group had got an extra deer so we went home shortly with three deer.

In August of 1962, I purchased a used 1956-S-120 four-wheel drive International for $1,000. Now I had a vehicle which would go through bad roads in Canada, so the latter part of September, Chauncey and his father, Ted Otterkill, Pete Carlson and I left for Canada once again to hunt moose. We were undecided where to hunt as the river trip had seemed to be very long; but, we had such wonderful luck, we decided to try it again. We picked up Alex Stevens and loaded everything needed into the canoes. Alex said that this time we would go even farther than last year and, instead of going up the Nagagami River, we would go down the large river toward where the Albany River comes in. We passed the old Hudson Bay Trading Post and the river became very wide and deep. After we passed where the Little Drowning River came in, we decided to set up camp.

Our guide, Alex Stevens, 1962.

Alex Stevens with the two empty canoes after we finished unloading our supplies in 1962.

The first morning of this 1962 moose season, Alex, Ted and Pete went up the Little Drowning River, and Chauncey, his father and I went up the Little Current River. We traveled a few miles up the river when we spotted a cow moose and calf feeding on the river bank. We sneaked up on them and Chauncey took the calf and I took the cow. We dressed them out and decided to let them lie until we had help to load them into the canoes. We got back to camp about dark and our other partners were there also. They had not seen anything. The moose were already being thinned out considerably.

The next day we loaded our moose into canoes and on our way back we saw a large bull caribou in the river. I think he had injured his back leg in fighting. We decided he had stayed in the river to escape further harm. He had a beautiful rack and was very pretty. We took many movie pictures. There is no hunting season on caribou in this part of Ontario. We did quite a bit more hunting without seeing any moose, so we decided to give up and go home. It was a long trip up the river to the landing, but all went well. We did not have nearly the display of moose this year that we had in 1961.

In the deer season of 1962, we took the four-wheel drive and went to Ted Otterkill's cabin again at Bagley. We went up into the buckboard hills which meant very hilly country. It was fun climbing the hills with the truck. My brother shot two fawns; this was about all we could find. It seemed deer were scarce also.

In March of 1963, Chauncey and I decided to go to the North Shore and see what we could learn about how the deer survived in the severe winters. We asked some people in Two Harbors if they knew of anyone who had been feeding deer in the past winters. They told us of a Mrs. Decker who had been feeding them many years. We found her place and found her to be a very

small and very interesting person. She said she had fed a lot of deer but could not afford to do so much longer. I told her I would see that she got all the hay and corn that she needed. The snow was settling by then, so we did not deliver any hay or corn that spring. We did leave a small amount of corn and hay at Mrs. Decker's home when we went moose hunting in the Fall of 1963.

Ted Otterkill could not go with us so he sent Art Jorgenson in his place. This time Roland Malenfant went with us on the hunt, so it was Chauncey, Art Jorgenson, Roland and I. We went farther down the river than previously. The river was very low so it was very difficult to travel. We had to get out in the water many times to pull the canoes over the shallow places.

We finally set up camp and started to hunt. There were Indians from James Bay fishing along the river. The airplane would pick up their fish every so often. We found many places where moose had been killed and parts of them left to go to waste. Roland took Art and Chauncey with him, and I hunted alone. Art and Chauncey shot a young bull and I shot a young cow, so we had two moose for three of us, which was not too bad.

We had about 110 miles to go back up the river. We thought we might get a moose on the way out, but no such luck. We did see a calf caribou on the way and took movie pictures of him. I have many reels of movie pictures but not many still-life pictures. After much pulling and tugging on the canoes, we reached the landing. It was always quite a task to transfer everything from the canoes to the truck as it was such a high bank by the river. Soon we were on our way home with another moose hunting season behind us.

When the 1963 deer season arrived, my brother Carl, Chauncey and I went to Ted's cabin at Bagley again. We drove up into the buckboard hills once more and began hunting. I was just making a tree stand when a doe came bouncing along. I was lucky and shot her right in the neck. Towards evening my brother came along and had not seen any deer, so I told him to take my stand as I had my deer. Just as the sun was going down, a buck and a doe came along and Carl shot both of them. The three of us went home with a deer each.

In early winter of 1963-64, my wife Inez and I filled our four-wheel drive with hay and corn and again drove to Mrs. Decker's home about 10 miles north of Two Harbors. We stayed at her home overnight. I will never forget how she put corn out for the deer and then we would sit in the house and watch the deer come out of the woods and eat it. I could not help but wonder **why** the Game Warden said it does not work to feed deer.

The next day being Sunday, Mrs. Decker said she would take her car and we would go farther north and see some more people who were feeding the deer. This was very interesting, and I promised more people I would deliver hay and corn to them. Our next trip meant filling one of the larger trucks with hay and corn. I was beginning to get some donations of hay and grain. There were always one or two additional people that would want to ride with me to see the deer. When I delivered the loads to the different places, the people

would tell me of more people farther north that were also feeding deer. We began to take a lot of pictures, mostly movie pictures.

These are some of the first deer we saw come into Mrs. Decker's yard to eat hay and corn. I enjoyed all these trips very, very much.

In 1964 we were undecided where to hunt moose in Ontario, but finally decided to try the river once more. I had written to Alex Stevens about his guiding us, but he had broken his leg very seriously so he would be unable to go with us. His son Stanley was going to replace him. This year we had another newcomer with us. His name was Abe Swanson, a friend of Chauncey's. Our group this year consisted of the two Kelseys, Abe Swanson, Art Ryan, Ted Otterkill, Art Jorgenson and I, seven of us. Pete Carlson had decided to drop out.

We loaded all of the canoes and started down river once more. We decided we would hunt the Nagagomi River as it would not be as far as to go down the large river. We hunted several days and never saw even a fresh sign. We met some hunters who had been fishing for a week before moose season, and they had not seen a moose in all of that time. We hunted about four or five days without seeing anything, so we decided to give up and go home. There was not much to tell about this trip. We were busy at home building onto two barns, so I was anxious to get home.

The 1964 deer season was about as luckless for us as our moose season had been. It was just Chauncey, his son Alan, and I in the group. The rest of the hunters were too busy or had just dropped out. Anyway, we tried our luck. George Schneider of Rush City had loaned us a school bus all fixed up to ac-

commodate hunters, so we really had a nice place to stay. We hunted by Kingsdale. Chauncey and I both had shooting opportunities but could not connect.

When I started hauling livestock in 1943 to the Cudahy packing plant in Newport, Minnesota, I saw a picture hanging on a wall of a man feeding a deer with his hand. I asked, "Who can get that close to a deer?" They told me a man on the North Shore feeds the deer and almost makes pets out of them. On my second or third trip North with a truck load of hay and corn about 1964, I was told that Earl Funk on the caribou trail feeds a lot of deer. I made it a point to stop at his place. He was a very friendly man living alone. He invited us into his home. The very first thing that caught my eye was this picture on the wall. Now, I had met the man whose picture I had seen back in 1943 at the Cudahy packing plant.

Earl Funk hand-feeding a deer along the North Shore.

Deer eating corn in Earl Funk's yard.

We made many inquiries about the moose hunting for 1965, but did not learn of any promising hunting area. The moose were getting more scarce under the heavy hunting. We were down to a group of five this year—the two Kelseys, Art Jorgenson, Ted Otterkill and I, with two pickup trucks. We stopped at Dorion to buy some groceries. We asked the lady in charge if she knew anything about the moose hunting. She said, "If you want a good guide, you should get my brother-in-law." She called him and he came right over. He did not have time to guide us then, but for a small fee he would show us where to hunt. He took us out to Wolf Pup Lake and we set up camp by the lake. When we came to make supper, we found the tank on the gas stove leaked. I had seen some old kettles by an old lumber camp so I went to pick up some of them. We built the fire in them and cooked on the open fire.

On my way to get the kettles, a young bull moose met me in the middle of the road. I guess he knew the season was not open yet so he was safe. He found the situation was different the next morning when Chauncey met him. I am sure it was the same moose that had met me, so now we had one moose for four hunters. We hunted two or three days, Ted being the only one to see a moose in this time. He saw a young cow, but did not get a shot at it. Then he got a quick shot to the chest of a nice bull. They signaled for me to come and I helped trail it, but we had to give up as the ground was too hard for tracks and there was no blood trail.

Ted and I were riding in my International 4 x 4 and I told Ted, "I do not think there are any moose left here." I had no more than finished the sentence when I yelled, "Look Ted! There are two of them." A cow came running wide open across the road with a bull right behind her. I stopped the truck on a dime and jumped out. The bull's back end was just disappearing in the bush when I got

in one shot with my Winchester 32 Special. The bull really cooperated with me. I think he thought, "What stung me?", as he came right back out onto the road. I fired again and I knew I hit him. Then Ted fired his 30-06 and missed. Then I shot the third time and I knew that I hit him again. Again, Ted fired his 30-06 and the moose dropped like a ton of lead. Ted shouted, "I got him!" I said, "Ted, give me a little credit! You will find more than one hole in him!"

We examined the bull closely and the first shot, which had been mine, had hit him in the hind quarters. That shot was what caused the moose to think a bee had stung him. The second and third shots were right under the backbone, an inch apart, when he nearly went down. Ted's 30-06 bullet went right through the moose's chest. Then Ted said, "Robert, I admit you can do wonders with that pop gun, but you should get a bigger gun." I think getting that bull moose with my gun is one of the biggest thrills I have had while moose hunting. This happened right by a waterfall so we could wash out the bull nicely. We had a "come-along" so it went nicely to load him.

We hunted a short while longer and then decided to go home. We all agreed we had a nice time hunting. Returning towards home with the four-wheel drive and pickup was a little easier than the long canoe trip on the river.

For the 1965 deer season, Chauncey, his son Alan, my nephew Harland Lofgren, and I decided to try our luck around the town of "Four Towns" near Red Lake. We drove East and North and set up a tent at our destination. It was very cold and snowing. We hunted the first day without seeing any deer signs at all, but we did see fresh moose tracks in the snow. It was very cold in our tent, so we decided to go to see some people we had learned to know around Gatzke. These people were very good hunters who knew the area well and had a lot of experience. We joined their group and they put Chauncey on a stand on the west side of a woods they were going to drive, my nephew Alan Kelsey on the east side, and me on the south side. Nephew Harland was with on the drive. A buck and a doe came out to Chauncey and he got both of them.

There was a large field where I was standing and I was wondering—should a deer come out way down at the corner of the woods, how would I reach it? Sure enough, a doe came bouncing out. These other hunters were all "crack shots" so I thought I better do the best I could with my 32. I emptied the gun before I got her—but I did get her! I stepped off the distance between the deer and me and it was about 240 yards. We made more drives that afternoon and the others in the group got a total of seven more deer. That was really an action-filled day. I think it must really thin out the deer population to comb the woods like that.

In the winter of 1965-66, we made more trips to the North Shore with hay and corn and were meeting more people feeding deer. I found it very interesting. We met another elderly man living alone by the name of George Wegstein. He spent much of his days with his deer. He made pets of some of them. He had names for most of them. So we would go back year after year to see

these deer. He owned 40 acres of land and he would spend most of the deer season in his woods to see that no one hunted there. Each Christmas he would send us a card like these shown here.

Deer being fed in Mrs. Decker's yard along the North Shore.

George Wegstein feeding his deer. (from a Christmas card)

As I said, we brought home two moose in 1965 and now we had a larger group going hunting in 1966. Chauncey's brother, Dr. Clive Kelsey who is a dentist, wanted to go with us so our group consisted of the two Kelsey brothers, Art Jorgenson, Ted Otterkill, Art Ryan and me, and a good Indian guide. (Dr. Carleton Kelsey decided to drop out as he was well past 80 years old.) Chauncey and Clive and two of their children had made a trip toward Kenora up the Jones Road to Oak Lake and Maynard Lake sometime before the season to scout the country.

Clive brought along a large boat with a 90 horsepower Mercury motor and Chauncey and I had our large canoes plus two small aluminum canoes. We set up our camp on the far end of Oak Lake. Maynard Lake joined Oak Lake by a narrow body of water. Chauncey and Clive shot a young bull moose and a young cow moose on the far end of Maynard Lake. We loaded both moose into Clive's large boat. As we went by the landing where our trucks were parked, I suggested we hang the moose in trees by the trucks. The rest of our group thought the moose would not be safe hanging in the trees unattended, so we brought them to camp on the opposite end of both lakes. We hunted several days along the lakes, but saw no more signs of moose. Ted did shoot a doe and a fawn as we were allowed to shoot deer also on our licenses those years. I saw a small brown bear but did not shoot at it.

The day before we decided to head for home, Clive was going to take us all in his large boat to the far end of the lake to hunt. He was traveling very fast with the 90 horsepower motor on the boat when we hit a rock submerged in the lake. This put the boat and motor out of use completely. Now we were left with just two large canoes and two small canoes to transport two moose, all of our equipment and seven men.

Chauncey and Clive insisted they take one moose each in their small canoes plus themselves as they had a motor on each canoe. I said I thought it would be better if I would take both the moose in my large canoe as I was sure it would carry them. The two moose were theirs, so they could do as they wished. I had my canoe piled high with equipment and the other large canoe had the other four men plus some equipment. The Indian and four men were ahead in their canoe. I came next with my canoe, then Chauncey and Clive in their canoes.

Everything went well until we got out into the wide part of the lake and a strong wind came up. The waves became higher and higher. I lost sight of Chauncey and Clive who were behind me. I caught up to the canoe ahead and told the Indian and the four passengers that we would have to go back as I knew Chauncey and Clive were having trouble. They told me both the men were used to canoeing and would be all right. We continued a short distance and I searched the lake behind us but could see no one. Again I begged that we turn back, but they assured me that Chauncey and Clive would make it. When we got to the landing, I ran up the hill to get the truck so we could load the equipment into it right away. When I got back to the water, the four men had unloaded their canoe, and the Indian had left alone to go to meet Chauncey and Clive.

We unloaded my canoe and I was going to start back across the lake alone in my canoe, but the waves were very high and I did not have any weight in the front end of the canoe so the canoe would go straight up in the air over the waves, so I went back and asked for a volunteer. Art Ryan put on several life jackets and came with me in my canoe. I was very frightened while going across the lake and was wondering what we would find.

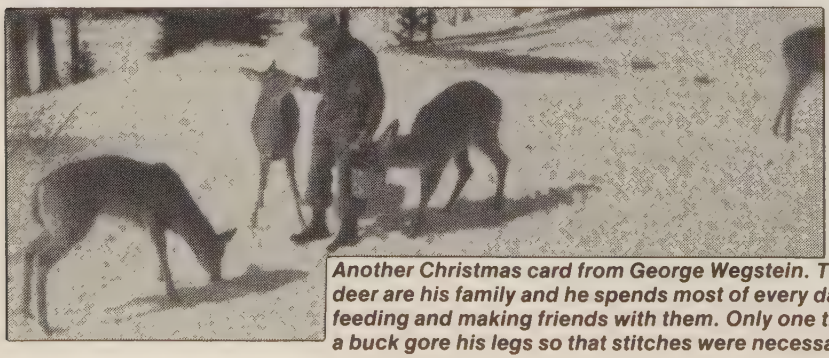
When the Indian, ahead of us, had found the men, Chauncey was in the water. His canoe had almost submerged, but he was trying to hang on to the canoe. He was about ready to give up as the waves were splashing over his head. Clive was still sitting in his canoe as it was not quite so far down into the water as Chauncey's canoe was. There was air sealed in both ends of the canoes so that is why they did not sink completely.

The Indian had helped Chauncey back into his canoe and got both Clive and Chauncey back to shore, emptied the canoes of water, and started out again. I will never forget that sight when we met them. I just knew this problem was going to happen. We were very thankful Chauncey and Clive did not drown. The rest of the hunting party went home to Saint Paul, but I stayed and went alone over to Ignace and up toward Savant Lake and hunted a day, but no luck. This was a year to remember, but I did not know then that my own near-tragic experience was still ahead of me.

Chauncey and Clive, my nephew Harland and I went to Craigville, Minnesota to hunt deer in 1966. We went down an old trail that, believe it or not, was marked "Lofgren Trail." I do not know how long the sign had been there, but it was old.

The first day of our hunting I shot a doe and the other three did not see anything. Chauncey and Clive were planning to leave to return to Saint Paul about 10 a.m. the second day. Harland shot a nice buck about 9:45 a.m. that day, so we had to run fast back to camp so we could send the one deer I shot home with Chauncey and Clive. I wanted to hunt another day. We were lucky to catch them as they were leaving, and they were glad to have a deer to take home with them. Harland and I went back to our same area and I shot at another doe and drew a little blood so I followed the trail as we had some snow. The doe went way down into a thick swamp, a large track joined her tracks, so I knew she was not hit hard; I gave up trailing her. When I got back to Harland, he had shot another buck identical to the first buck he had shot. Harland was really tickled—two bucks in one season.

The winter of 1966-67, we again made trips to the North Shore with feed for the deer. As I have mentioned before, we took mostly moving pictures so we do not have many still pictures in these years.



Another Christmas card from George Wegstein. These deer are his family and he spends most of every day feeding and making friends with them. Only one time did a buck gore his legs so that stitches were necessary.

For the 1967 moose season we were a large group again. Chauncey's father, Dr. Carleton Kelsey, decided to accompany us again, so our party consisted of him, his two sons, Chauncey and Clive, Art Ryan, Ted Otterkill, Art Jorgenson, Chauncey's son-in-law Harold Grindstaff from Lynchburg, Virginia and me. We decided to hunt along Lake Nipegon. We set up camp right by Lake Nipegon and hunted the lake for two days but did not see anything. I bought some fish to eat from a fishing boat. The boat had run onto a sand bar so they had to unload their fish and sufficient other weight to allow them to slide the boat off the sand bar.

The third day we decided to hunt the old logging roads. I was up on a windfall watching down an old road when I saw a large cow moose starting to trot across the road. I quickly aimed and fired four times as the cow was quite a distance away, and my popgun (as Ted called it) was not big enough to effectively shoot moose. The cow disappeared but I stayed where I was, hoping maybe to see the cow again. I heard something to my left so made my way through the windfalls and brush and I found the cow. My popgun had made its mark with one or two lung shots. She was an unusually large cow. She did not have a calf with her.

Now we had the problem of getting the cow out of the brush. We were a number of men so we dragged her but the going was rough. I brought the 4 x 4 part way. There was a really bad mud hole which we would need to cross with our vehicle in order to reach the cow, but I decided to try it as I had chains on all four wheels. I got as much speed on the vehicle as I dared and made it through the mud empty, but, after we loaded the cow onto the truck and I tried driving back, I really buried the truck in the mud. I stood in the water and shoveled mud out until I could get a log under each wheel. Finally we got out.

When we got back to camp, I put a pulley high up on a fairly large spruce tree with the intention of pulling the cow moose up, but the tree broke off instead. I tried another tree with the same result. I then tied two trees together and hoisted the cow so it was hanging just off the ground.

We finally had our supper and thought about going to bed as we were really exhausted. There were quite a few of us men to sleep in the tent so, as I have my own sleeping bag designed for sleeping outdoors, I slept in that, not very far from the cow moose hanging from the trees. About midnight I awakened and I saw the trees from which the moose was hanging were moving. I thought it was the wind, but then I looked at the other trees nearby and they were not moving. Then I saw a black form by the moose and then the moose would shake. Now I knew a bear was eating on my moose. As soon as I made a move, the bear was gone. I went into the tent and asked the boys not to come out by the moose as I was going to try to shoot a bear.

I hung the old kerosene lantern on the outside mirror of the truck and took my 32 and went back into my sleeping bag. I did not put a shell in the barrel of the 32 as I did not want to have an accident, but I did have the magazine full. About 1:20 a.m., I awakened again, and the moose was shaking. I saw the

dark form of the animal. I was very excited and aimed and pulled the trigger. All that happened was "CLICK". The bear heard that noise and disappeared. As quietly as I could I worked the lever on the gun and was ready. In a short time the bear was back for more meat. This time he made a mistake and at my first shot he started squealing. I jumped out of my bag and shot him several times as I was disgusted that he had eaten so much meat. The boys all came out, excited and laughing. Clive said he wished he had a tape recording of the way I talked to the bear. That was really a thrilling experience for me.

We hunted one more day and then decided to go home as signs for getting more moose were very scarce. I treated everyone to supper on the way home as they had worked very hard to help me get my moose out. We hung the moose and bear in the park at Rush City.

The cow moose I shot near Lake Nipigon and the bear I caught stealing our meat, 1967.

We decided to go to Craigville again to hunt deer in 1967. Our party consisted of Chauncey and his son Alan, Clive and his son Tommy, my nephew Harland and me. We drove way back in the brush on the old trail and hunted several days without seeing any deer or signs of deer, so we gave up and went home with no meat. The deer were either very smart or very scarce.

As usual, in the winter of 1967-68, we hauled feed for the deer along the North Shore. When we visited Earl Funk's yard, he gave me these pictures which he had taken of these deer that had been wounded in the hunting season.

Picture of wounded deer in Earl Funk's yard.

Another wounded deer in Earl's yard.

Another beautiful Christmas card from George.

Moose hunting season in 1968 was drawing close. Clive Kelsey had a friend who had hunted above Ignace and had gone down a river and portaged into a lake. This friend had said there were very few hunters there and plenty of moose, so that is where we were to go. We were quite a group—the two Kelseys (Chauncey and Clive), Art Jorgenson, Ted Otterkill, Art Ryan and Clive's friend John Trask and I. Oh, yes, I had a friend who wanted to go moose hunting with us—Bronson Erickson from Rush City. So we were a total of eight men. It was quite a task to carry everything across the portage, but we finally got to the lake and set up camp. We checked for moose signs many places and did find tracks. There were also plenty of hunters.

Bronson and I were in my canoe on the lake when we heard shooting. We went the direction from which the shots came. Between Chauncey, Ted Otterkill, Art Ryan and Art Jorgenson, they had wounded a bull, but had not started to trail it. Bronson and I said we would help trail the bull. We trailed it quite a distance. The others thought it would be useless to continue. I said Bronson and I would follow the trail as we had nothing better to do at the time. We did not go very far when we jumped the bull—a pretty nice one. I told Bronson to take the moose as it was his first hunting trip. Bronson shot twice and I shot twice, but I was sure my 32 Winchester misfired on my second shot. Anyway, we got the moose so I more or less forgot about the condition of my rifle.

We shot our moose about three-quarters of a mile from the lake, but we were several men to drag the moose so we decided to take it out whole. That was the hardest we ever worked to get a moose out. The temperature was between 80 and 90 degrees.

Art Ryan, Ted Otterkill and Art Jorgenson had to go home the next day so we sent the one bull moose home with them. The man at the locker plant where the moose was to be processed said the moose meat was already spoiled and threw it all away. We felt very bad about that as it was the first we had lost in any manner after dressing it out.

We hunted some more that day and then Chauncey and Clive Kelsey and John Trask decided to go home to Saint Paul. Bronson Erickson and I went farther north to Savant Lake and stayed overnight. We hired an Indian guide the next day, but the guide's canoe was so poor we would not travel on the water with it. We hunted in the bush that day without seeing any signs. We left the area that evening and headed toward home.

The next day on our way toward home, we stopped along the highway as we had fresh snow during the night, which should make for good hunting. I had just gone into the bush a short way when I found a fresh moose bed. I followed the tracks and soon there were two tracks. I was now very excited. The tracks came to a small lake and there the tracks ended. I could not get around the lake to find where the tracks came out so I had to give up the hunt. At least I knew there were moose there. Bronson had not seen anything and now we also had to get home.

Chauncey had purchased some land with a small house on it by the town of Zerkel near Ted Otterkill's cabin. So in November 1968, Chauncey invited us to stay at his house during our deer hunting season. We were quite a group, but no one was very lucky in getting deer. I was hunting alone when I saw Chauncey coming. Just then I saw a nice buck running nearby. I shot once and missed. I shot twice and missed. I knew I would have to get him with my next shot or I would not see him again. I took special aim and pulled the trigger. It went "CLICK" again, so now I knew there was something wrong with my gun.

In a short time I heard a shot to my right. By then Chauncey had caught up to me. I told him of my luck and I said we would follow the buck's track as he was a dandy. We had not gone far when we met up with Harland. He was madder than a wet hen. I said, "What's the matter?" He said, "I had a standing shot at a big buck and missed him." He had taken extra careful aim besides. I asked if he had followed the tracks. He said he had, but there was not any blood. There was a lot of snow, so tracking was easy. I said that we would follow the tracks anyway. We had not gone far when I showed Harland pin drops of blood in the snow. Just then Chauncey exclaimed, "There he is, lying over there!" We dressed out the buck. Harland had hit him right through the heart.

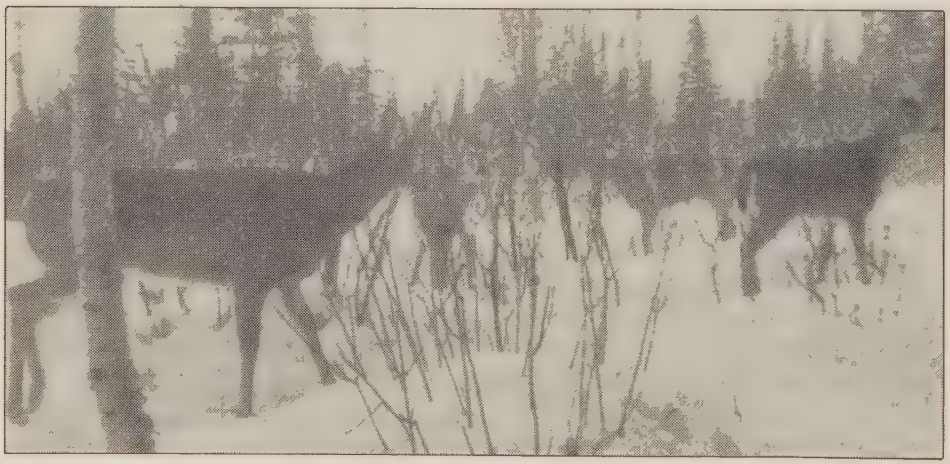
Toward dusk, Bronson and I were standing close to the trail when Bronson saw a doe and a fawn running on the ridge. He fired and his 30-06 jammed. I fired my 32 and it "CLICKED" again. Now I was really disgusted.

We hunted the next day with no luck. Again, toward evening, we were all standing in the same places as last evening. We think the doe and the fawn which came running were the same animals we saw last evening. I was the

only one who had his gun loaded. I took just a real quick shot as it was getting dark and the deer were running. Luckily my 32 fired and Bronson, who has very sharp eyesight, said, "You hit one of them." I answered, "I think not because I shot so quickly." Bronson said he saw the animal stumble. We found the tracks and, sure enough, there was blood. Then we heard two shots. We followed the blood tracks and very shortly came to a hunter. He had a fawn. We looked it over and found it had a broken foot in addition to the damage where the hunter had hit it. We believed it was my shot that damaged the deer's foot. The hunter said he had taken a shot at the doe, so he said we should follow that track. We did not go far before we found the doe, so we got the larger deer of the two. It was a lot of excitement just before dark. Anyway, we went home from this hunt with three deer.

Late in the fall of 1968, I was driving the truck back from Cokato, Minnesota and I had a little time to spare so I stopped at the gun shop on Highway 12. It was then called *"The Outdoorsman"*. I asked them if they had a rifle with a lever action and a hammer larger than a 32 special. He took down a very nice rifle and asked, "How about this one?" It was a 348 Winchester made back in the 1930s. I had never seen that model. It was a much larger and more powerful cartridge than my 32 special, so I immediately bought it for $140. Now I hoped I had a large enough gun to shoot moose.

In the winter of 1968-69, we met many more people on the North Shore that were feeding deer. It was getting difficult to deliver a little bit of feed to everyone who wanted to feed deer. Arnold Peters lived in the Spruce Creek area and right next to him lived Mr. and Mrs. Willie Williamson. They were all retired people and very kind and friendly. Williamson had a doe in their shed. It was so thin and weak it could not get up. I left some good alfalfa hay and corn and told them to keep that in front of the doe along with some water. The next time we came to their place, the deer was moving around. Again, I could hear those words, "It does not work to feed deer hay and corn; they will die."



Deer feeding in Arnold Peters' yard.

Earl Funk feeding deer on the Caribou Trail.

George Wegstein's Christmas card.

"LOFGREN AND OTHERS FEED DEER AS HOBBY

The Rush City Post carried an article about Robert E. Lofgren, a rural livestock trucker of Rush City, and his deer feeding activities. Long before there was any public outcry for feeding the deer, Mr. Lofgren is said to have carried on his private venture, hauling alfalfa from his own farm in his own truck on his own time and expense, to the deer areas on the North Shore. Year after year he did this. Finally he interested others there to join him. In the latter part of February, for instance, two of Lofgren's trucks hauled loads of hay and shelled corn to the northern deer areas."

DURING THE WINTER of 1960-65 traffic on the North Shore Drive killed approximately one deer for every mile of highway.

Please drive carefully during the winter and watch for deer crossing.

Visitors, to see the deer, are always welcome. Bring your cameras. Half mile north of No. 61 on County No. 4 (Caribou Trail).

LUTSEN DEER FEEDING YARD

Earl Funk

THANK YOU

Earl Funk furnished these cards to visitors.

DEER STARVATION ILLUSTRATED

The Rush City Post

POST PHOTO—

The plight of starving deer on Minnesota's northern deer ranges was illustrated this week by Robert Lofgren of rural Rush City. Lofgren, long interested and active in deer conservation work, brought back two carcasses from up north. Both deer were victims of starvation, he said. One of them, however, apparently died from an improper diet, even though he had a layer of fat. The destruction of the carcasses came, he stressed, not from the work of wolves, but from ravens. Lofgren witnessed the ravens feeding on the body of one of the deer. The local man has been attempting to convince conservationists that the feeding of brush is not enough to save the hard-hit deer population—that alfalfa and corn must also supplement the diet.

Most of the group decided not to go moose hunting in 1969, so it was just Chauncey and his son-in-law, Harold Grindstaff from the state of Virginia, Bronson and I. I had contacted Alex Stevens and he agreed to take us down the Pagwa River, which eventually would come out down by the post where we used to hunt, which would be about 65 miles.

We went down the river about 20 miles and set up camp. There were some moose signs there. A short way from camp, the river was so shallow that we could not travel by canoe. Chauncey and Harold hunted together; Alex and Bronson hunted together; and I hunted alone. Chauncey got a young bull moose the first morning and the second morning Harold got a moose almost identical to the one that Chauncey had shot. Bronson, Alex and I did not see anything.

Early on the second afternoon, while up the river a ways in my canoe, I spied another young bull on the shore. It was too long a shot, so I wanted to get closer to him. Just then, my canoe hit a rock, making some noise. The moose immediately headed for the woods. I hurried and shot. The moose turned right around and went into the river.

There was a bend in the river, so I could not see whether the moose came onto the shore. I looked and looked and looked. I was sure I had hit him. This was the first time I had shot at a moose with the 348. I never found the moose. Alex thought maybe the moose went to the bottom of the river. I was very disappointed not to have got this moose with the large rifle I had just purchased.

We hunted in this area two more days and then started up the river. The river was very shallow in places so we had to walk in the water and pull the canoes with the heavy loads, which was a lot of work; but, that is all in the moose hunting game. It was always a welcome sight to see the landing after a long hard trip on the water.

Our deer hunting seemed to be getting poorer each year. We were quite a large group that went to Chauncey's cabin near Zerkel in 1969. We all hunted the entire weekend with none of us connecting with a deer. When I arrived home late Sunday evening, my wife told me that my brother Carl had shot three deer right around his farm. That was kind of putting salt on the wound. We traveled so far and brought home nothing, and Carl more or less shot three deer while continuing with his work.

The winter of 1969-70 was one of the deepest snow depths along the North Shore that I have ever seen in my life. I went up into the brush and stepped off from the deer trail and stamped my feet until the snow was solid underneath my feet. The snow then was almost up to my chin. I have many feet of moving pictures of this but not any still pictures. The deer have trails which they use almost every day and they stay right on their trail and reach whatever browse they can. If they jump off from their trail, they can hardly make it back up onto their trail when they are in a weakened condition from starvation.

Now there were more people than ever who would like some feed for their deer. We decided to take two truck loads of hay and corn to the North Shore.

My son David and my hunting partner Bronson Erickson loaded the trucks. We almost always went on a Sunday morning. It was a long day as the round trip was over 400 miles, plus delivering to all the different places.

1969 and 1970—loading deer feed for delivery to the North Shore. Bronson Erickson on the ground, David Lofgren in the truck.

As we were driving along the highway, we saw many deer out in the brush. We also saw many dead deer. I happened to see this lone deer not far from the highway so I stopped. I asked Bronson and David to go out and catch that deer because I could tell it was very weak. I told them I would take pictures while they caught the deer. They both looked at me and smiled. I said again, "Go out and catch it. I know it can not run." They managed to get through the **very** deep snow close to where the deer stood. The deer gave one jump and then just lay there while David and Bronson prepared to pick it up.

Mrs. Decker was with us and it was she who took these pictures. We put the poor little deer in the truck and headed for the Williamson's and Arnold Peters'. I asked Mrs. Peters for a little warm milk with a little sugar in it and a small bottle with which to feed the little deer. We finished our delivering and headed for home. Again, I say, they were long days.

When we arrived home, I put the little deer in our barn in the feeding alley in front of the cows. When I was through with chores that evening, I saw the little deer was up nibbling grain that the cows had spilled. Again, I remembered those words, "It does not work to feed the deer hay and corn. They will die."

The deer became stronger each day. It would drink warm milk out of a dish I held for it. After being in the barn about two months, it was full of pep.

We had two large bulls tied in a pen. The deer would jump over the manger and go between the bulls and lay down behind them and chew its cud. I must say that was thrilling—to have a deer in the barn while I did chores.

My son, David Lofgren and my hunting companion, Bronson Erickson picking up a starving deer.

Robert Lofgren and son David, giving milk to a starving deer, 1970.

The recovering deer in our barn. (Note the large bull directly behind the deer's hind quarters. This bull weighed 2,520 pounds when we sold him that spring!)

When we were going to make our last trip to the North Shore for that winter, we loaded the truck full except for a small space at the end of the load where we would put the deer. When we started to try to catch the deer, I noticed it had a large cut on the hind quarter. I am sure one of the large bulls had stepped on it. I happened to have some green medicine the veterinarian had given me to put on a cow's hoof when that was cut, so I poured that medicine on the deer's wound. It left a large patch of green on the hind quarter. I thought, "Now we can recognize this deer if we see it again."

We had a very difficult time catching the deer. It would leap over the manger between the cows and then run all over the barn. When we finally caught the deer, we put it in the small space reserved for it in the truck and quickly closed the door. When we arrived at Mrs. Decker's home, I opened the door and the deer leaped out and ran among the other deer that were feeding there. I told Mrs. Decker about the wound on the deer and the green patch. By this time Mrs. Decker had named the deer Bobby, as she had named the others also. She said she would watch for Bobby in her yard.

The following weekend, my wife Inez and daughter Joanne and our son-in-law John Ploetz went to Mrs. Decker's home to see if Bobby was still around. Mrs. Decker said Bobby hardly ever left the yard. They took many pictures of Bobby eating corn. Now I was convinced one hundred percent that you can feed deer. That was a very rewarding year for me as I know we saved a great number of deer from starvation.

Deer in Mrs. Decker's yard, "Bobby" was among them.

Our deer "Bobby" eating in Mrs. Decker's yard.

I must mention that we were treated very kindly by the people on the North Shore. We had dinners three successive Sundays at the Williamson's home. Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Peters brought food over and helped also.

Dinner with Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Peters and Mr. and Mrs. Williamson at the Williamson home.

The Williamson home in the Spruce Creek area along the North Shore. We had three Sunday dinners in a row at the William Williamson and Arnold Peters homes.

Arnold Peters from the North Shore wrote me a letter stating that the Cedar Valley Sportsmens Club from Austin, Minnesota had two loads of alfalfa hay to donate for feeding the deer if they could find someone to haul it to the North Shore. At that time, I was hauling shotgun wads and duck decoys from Plastech at Rush City to Herters at Waseca. I agreed to go to Austin and pick up the two loads at different times. I was told there would be plenty of help to load the alfalfa hay. There was plenty of help; they would not let me do anything. They also bought my supper. The two wardens came when we were through. I recognized one of them to be a warden I had seen on the North Shore. I delivered both loads of alfalfa hay in the area where Arnold Peters lived.

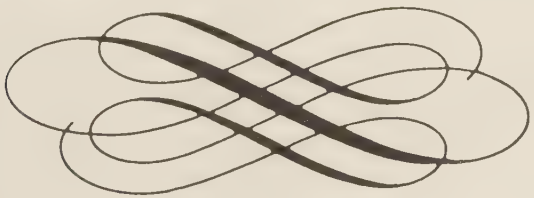
The following is a thank you letter in *The Cook County News Herald* from Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Peters of Lutsen, Minnesota:

"February 18, 1969

Dear Editor:

The Cedar Valley Sportsman Club of Austin, Minnesota, donated alfalfa hay twice to help the deer feeding situation on the North Shore. We personal friends, and any others who got it, are very grateful. We also want to say Mr. Robert Lofgren of Rush City donated his services, free of charge, for going to Austin after it.

Another, who has donated money to buy feed for deer each year is Mrs. Lillian Johnson of Minneapolis, a long-time friend of Mr. and Mrs. William Williamson."



As I mentioned, we had brought home two bull moose in 1969, which encouraged interest among others and we had a much larger group for the 1970 moose hunt. The group consisted of Chauncey, Art Ryan and his friend Carlson, Ted Otterkill, Bronson Erickson and me. The group decided we knew this river (the Pagwa) so we would not hire a guide as those years it was not compulsory that moose hunters hire guides.

We loaded all our equipment into the canoes and, believe me, there was a lot of equipment for that many men. We traveled about the same distance (20 miles) on the river as in 1969 and then set up camp. The next morning I said we would travel another 20 miles and then make our permanent camp. My co-hunters were not agreeable to this idea and thought we could get moose where we were. Bronson and I left early in the morning to travel farther down the river. As the water was extremely high, we had very good going without any trouble going through shallow places. This part of the river was new to Bronson and me as we had not traveled this far on the river previously. After about 20 miles, we came to another river coming in from the left. That river was called the Kenagami River, and where the Pagwa and the Kenagami rivers joined, the river was very large. A ways down the stream there were very fast and dangerous rapids.

I had asked Bronson as we started out that morning if I should run the motor. He said so long as it was his motor, he would do so. The motor did not

work real well through the morning. If Bronson slowed the motor, it wanted to die. So I told him to keep it running fast so we would not have trouble in the river. When we came to the Kenagami River, I told Bronson to turn left and that I did not think it would be too far to the post. After traveling a short distance, I realized my mistake. We were going upstream instead of downstream, and the river got more shallow than it would have been toward the post. I told Bronson to turn around and we would go back toward camp. We had not seen a thing all morning. The motor died and Bronson threw out his fish line once. I looked at him. Then he threw the line out again. I was very uneasy and I noticed we were drifting very fast right toward those deep and fast rapids.

Then I saw a large rock right ahead of the canoe and we were drifting exactly crosswise. I yelled, "Bronson, there is a big rock ahead and we are going to hit it!" Bronson pulled the cord once in an effort to start the motor, but the motor did not start. As Bronson pulled the cord a second time, the canoe hit the rock dead center. The rock slanted decidedly uphill, so the canoe tipped right onto its edge and filled with water in a second.

I yelled to Bronson, "Hang to the canoe and pray for your life." I jumped into the water with my left arm holding onto the front end of the canoe. I thought I could guide the canoe downstream, but soon the canoe started to roll over. I lost hold. I could hear Bronson's 30-06 fall out of the canoe. I could hear my 348 Winchester falling out. I knew I had my billfold, with over $300 in it, and my camera, in my knapsack, and I saw that knapsack floating on the water, plus all our sandwiches and everything else that had been in the canoe.

As I was standing in the water, the water was about up to my chin. I could not keep my balance against the swift current so I just went backward into the water. The next thing I knew I was looking at the rocks on the bottom of the river. My first thought was, "What will my wife, Inez, think if I do not come back from a foolish moose hunting trip?"

I knew I could swim when I was a young boy, and I knew now it was to swim or drown. Instead of a bathing suit, I was wearing long underwear, several shirts, wool trousers with new bib overalls over them, two pair of socks, leather shoes, five-buckle overshoes, a heavy wool mackinaw with two boxes of 348 shells in the pockets, and gloves.

I gave myself a terrific shove with my legs and started to swim. I will never forget the sound in my ears when I surfaced. I saw Bronson still hanging onto the canoe. I swam for all I was worth and once again grabbed onto the canoe. We drifted a ways and by then Bronson was in the lead and I was behind, but I had a hold on the front end of the canoe. All of a sudden we stopped. Bronson was about chest deep in the water and I was about the same level. I asked Bronson if he had his feet on solid ground and he said, "Yes." I said, "So have I." We were all tired out and in the very middle of the river in fast rapids with the canoe full of water.

"What do we do now??" The only experience I had traveling on water was while moose hunting, but instantly an idea came to me. I told Bronson to hang

onto the very back end of the canoe because I was going to raise the front end up high. I raised it quite a ways up and that looked good – to see part of the 21-foot canoe above water. I used all the strength I had and raised the canoe to a height above my head. Then I told Bronson, "Hang on! I am going to bring it down real fast." I did so, and the back end of the canoe popped above water. That looked even better.

I told Bronson I would hold the canoe solid in place. I gave him my cap and told him to bale out the water. My cap became quite limp so I told Bronson, "Take your cap. It is stronger and will hold more water." After baling water for some time, I asked Bronson if he could climb into the canoe if I would hold it real solid. He got into the canoe and now I was very relieved and thankful. I grabbed the front end of the canoe and popped into it. I weighed about 240 pounds and Bronson weighed about the same or a little heavier, so it was not two lightweights in the boat. There was a small board left in the canoe and Bronson used this to paddle and I used my hands. We finally made it to shore!

No one, without an experience like ours, will ever know what a welcome feeling it is to have your feet on solid land. I told Bronson I would never hunt moose again! Bronson had a good container in which he had dry matches. It had been drizzling most of the afternoon so it was very difficult to find any dry wood. I gathered birchbark and we soon had a fire going. It was raining and getting dark, and we really were worn out. I told Bronson that we had nothing to worry about; at least we were not going to drown and the rest of our group would come looking for us the next day.

We were trying to make the fire burn better when Bronson exclaimed, "Look, there is a canoe coming!" Then we saw three canoes. We were wild with excitement and yelled and waved our arms. The canoes came over to us and we told the passengers what had happened. It was a father and two sons from Switzerland with three guides from the little village of Pagwa. They took us into their camp for the night and gave us food to eat. Bronson and I were in a small tent and lying on the ground soaking wet, so we did not sleep much, but it was great to be with someone and have food.

The next morning, the small Indian, Caleb Reuben, who was one of the guides for the Swiss men, and whom I had known previously, hooked onto our damaged canoe and towed us up to our camp. On our way to camp, we stopped at a hunter's camp and he gave us cookies and coffee. You can imagine how good that tasted! This hunter had not seen any moose either – not that we were even thinking about moose then.

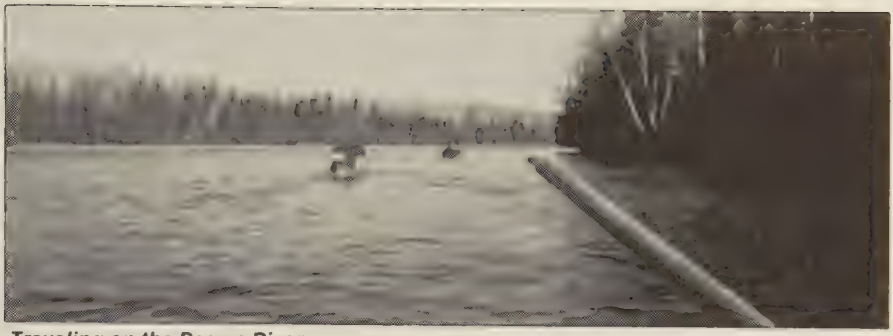
I thought that the rest of our group would be worried sick, but later one of the men said they thought we were just going to spend the night down the river because we had taken a whole box of sandwiches with us!! The men in our group had not seen any moose either. Bronson and I were very shook up, our motor and canoe were broken, so we decided to give up and go home. That was a lonesome trip home – without a dime in my pocket!

I felt very sorry to have lost my 348 Winchester rifle in the river as I did not know where to find another one. It was five weeks later that we lined up a diver from Saint Paul. He was sure he could find the rifles if we could show him the spot. I knew exactly where the spot was. Chauncey Kelsey, Bronson Erickson, the diver Tom Drewery and I headed for Pagwa River again. The river had dropped quite a bit, but traveling on it was still very good. On the way down we saw Caleb Ruben. He was trapping. We asked him if he would like to go with us and look for the rifles. He said, "Sure." We set up camp that night not too far from our destination. We had a good supper and went to bed. I always will remember Caleb when he said, "Stomach awful tight," meaning he was full. He also said, "What is better than going to bed with full stomach."

We were up early the next morning and traveling on the river. We had no problem finding the rock. The diver got his equipment on and went into the water. The rapids were very swift so I crouched on the rock and held a rope fastened to him. The diver found Bronson's 30-06 Remington, a funnel, a pair of pliers, the broken handle of the motor and a box of 30-06 cartridges, but he could not find my 348.

Left to right – Caleb Ruben, "The Old Moose Hunter" and Dr. Chauncey Kelsey.

"The Old Moose Hunter," checking out the swiftness of the rapids; Bronson and Caleb on shore.



Traveling on the Pagwa River.

Bronson Erickson and "The Old Moose Hunter" getting ready to continue down Pagwa River, with hopes of seeing a moose.

Caleb Ruben and Bronson Erickson on the alert in case of an emergency.

Getting ready to climb onto the rock. The water had dropped about two and one-half feet from when we had the accident.

Robert Lofgren on the rock, holding the canoe with a rope, 1970.

Getting ready for the dive.

The diver going into the river to look for the two guns.

Robert Lofgren on the rock that tipped over our canoe. The diver had an easier time as the river had dropped since the accident.

Diver bringing Bronson's 30-06 Remington out of the river.

Bronson and Caleb picking up the 30-06 rifle belonging to Bronson.

Bronson and the diver, Tom Drewery. Tom got very cold in the river and had to get warmed up. He went in a second time to look for my 348 Winchester, but was unsuccessful.

Tom Drewery, the diver, got very cold so he came out of the river for a while and we got him warmed up. He tried again to locate items in the river without success. We gave up and headed for Pagwa. We did not see a single moose either way. We had extra food along which we gave to Caleb as I knew he would make good use of it. This was another disappointing trip. A short time later, Marlyn Moses from Rush City and a few other hunters went to Montana to hunt. When Marlyn was out there he found a very nice 348 DeLuxe which he bought for me as he knew I wanted another one. I appreciated that very much.

The following winter, in 1971, my sister Marion and her husband Chauncey took a trip to Europe, including Switzerland. I gave them the name of the father and the two sons (Zule Secheney from Thun, Switzerland). Marion and Chauncey stopped to see these men. They were very excited to see my sister and her husband. They said they had shot two bulls down on that river that season and passed nine cows, so we would have had good hunting if our plans had not been interrupted. They sent pictures back with Chauncey and Marion.

Pictures from the Szechenys in Switzerland, sent home with my sister Marion and her husband, Dr. Kelsey on their trip to Europe in 1970.

The two Szecheny boys (front), holding antlers, and their guide holding one antler. The man in the middle is unknown. The man on the right with the checkered shirt is Bill Petty, the storekeeper.

The head of a moose that Jules Szecheny's son, from Switzerland, shot on the Kenagami River in Canada.

The winter of 1970-71 was also very severe and again we hauled feed to the North Shore. George Wegstein sent us a large framed picture like the one shown here of him feeding one of his pets. We have the picture hanging in our home and I think it is a really nice picture.

George Wegstein feeding one of this pets.

Deer at one of the places we delivered feed.

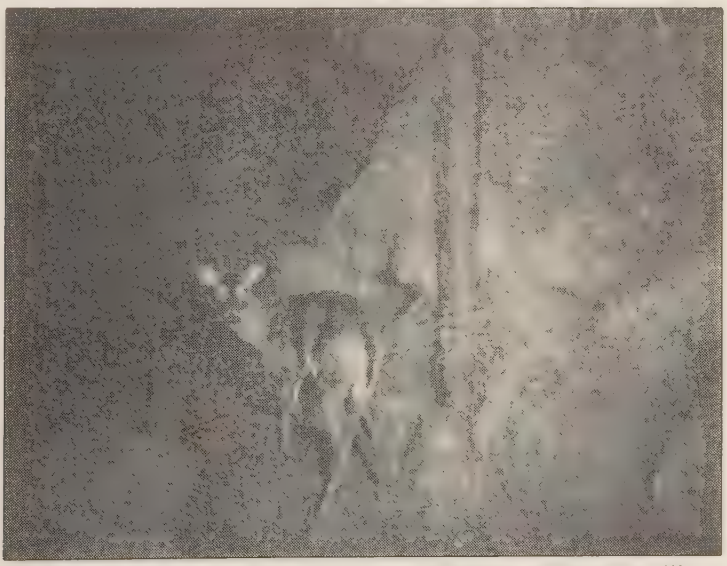
One morning I had a phone call the man said he was Vern Hoff from Little Marais. He told me he had about 90 deer coming into his yard for feed. He wondered if I would be able to bring some feed to his place to feed the deer. I told him 90 deer were a lot of animals to feed but that I would be sure to stop to see him. When we stopped at his place, I counted 138 deer. I had never seen anything like that in my life. His place was a sure stop for me from then on

Part of the large herd of deer that Vern Hoff of Little Marais was feeding. This was the largest feeding operation that I had seen at that time.

This large buck came into Earl Funk's yard many times. The buck still had these beautiful antlers in April, 1970.

One afternoon in January, 1971, I was making my second trip to the Twin Cities for a load of feed. As I traveled between Rush City and Harris, I noticed a small deer standing in the snow. It was a clear day and about 20 degrees below zero. I was sure the deer was starving so I stopped to have a closer look. I saw that one front leg had been shot off. The deer made no attempt to run so I immediately decided I would try to catch it on my return trip. I told the men where I got my feed that I would like to be loaded very quickly so that I could get back and catch a crippled deer before dark! The sun was just setting and it was very cold when I arrived back at the place where I had seen the crippled deer. I crossed the fence and made my way toward the deer. The snow being very deep, the deer had its own trail to seven different juniper trees, which was what it had for food. When I came on its trail, the deer began to run. At first I did not think I could catch the deer but, when it came to the last juniper bush, it jumped into the deep snow and just lay there. When I picked it up, it made no attempt to get away.

I carried it to the fence and then I wondered how to cross the fence. I thought if I put the deer over first, it may try to run away, so I tried to carry it as I climbed over the fence. We both fell to the other side and neither one of us moved. I knew then how weak the little deer was. I put it in our barn, the same as I had done before with another deer, and it got along just fine. It stayed in the barn until July when the wind blew a door open. The next morning it was gone and I never saw him again.



The three-legged deer I picked up between Harris and Rush City. We kept it in our barn.

The starvation of the deer had been so great that there was not a deer season in 1970.

As I mentioned before, the last Minnesota moose season was in 1922 and any hope of hunting moose in the future in Minnesota seemed out of the question. Now, in 1971, I read in our local newspaper that Minnesota would have a drawing for moose permits. A group of four would apply for one moose permit and 400 moose permits were going to be let out. Right away I said, "We will get my brother Carl to apply with us, as he is pretty lucky." Chauncey, Carl, Bronson and I sent in our application and, sure enough, we were notified that we were successful in getting a moose permit. We applied for Zone 5 which was close to Tofte and Schroeder.

We were to drive to Tofte on Thursday night so we would have Friday to look around as the season opened Saturday. Carl was too busy at home to go with us, and I had to haul a load of freight to Herters at Waseca Thursday night. That left Chauncey and Bronson to go up Thursday night and get things lined up. I joined them Friday evening. We had one of our trucks to live in. We also brought my small home-made caterpillar to bring out the moose if we were lucky.

Saturday morning was very foggy. Chauncey and I hunted together in the woods, but could not see more than a short ways, so we knew we would not get anything under those conditions. Bronson took my 4 x 4 and hunted the road. About 4:30 p.m., he saw a nice bull moose in an opening close to the road. He stopped and loaded his 30-06. Just then the bull crossed the road. One shot and our tag was filled. It was difficult to believe that now we had shot a moose in Minnesota.

We hung up the moose in the park at Rush City. Many pictures were taken of it.

The bull moose that Bronson Erickson bagged in Minnesota in 1971; the first year Minnesota had moose hunting since 1922. Bronson on the left; "The Old Moose Hunter" on the right.

"The Old Moose Hunter" holding Bronson's Minnesota moose head in the 1956 S-120 four-wheel drive truck.

We were again hauling feed for the deer on the North Shore in the winter of 1971 and 1972. It was after the first of the year in 1972 that we took two trucks North. My cousin Merle Lofgren drove one truck, and Sy Grote, a farmer from Greeley, rode with him. My grandson Brian and I took the other truck. When we delivered feed to one place at Tofte, the man said, "Why don't you pick up that large dead buck that is laying along the road? It will make good pig feed. No one picks them up anyway." Merle and Sy loaded that deer; we found another dead deer and did the same. When we got home that night, I put the carcasses in the pig pasture. They were frozen solid. The next night I checked to learn if they were still there. All that was left was a little hair. I thought to myself that that was a **little** compensation for my gas, time and the cost of the hay and corn.

Later on Dr. Kelsey and I took another load of feed North. Our last stop was at Mr. and Mrs. Williamson's place about 18 miles from Grand Marais. After we left their place and were on our way home, we saw a dead deer that had been plowed up onto the snowbank along the road. We stopped and put it in our truck. We had gone quite a way past Silver Bay when a red light pulled alongside of me. I stopped and the sheriff greeted me. He wanted to look in the truck. I told him I had a dead deer in the truck that I was taking home to feed to the pigs. He said nothing, but went to his car and called the game wardens.

In the meantime a Highway Patrol car stopped. Then the game wardens came (there were two of them) and arrested me and searched Dr. Kelsey for weapons. That **really** upset me. Then the three squad cars escorted us back to Silver Bay. I had to put up $104 bail so I could go home and do my chores. I decided I was going to stop all my deer feeding efforts, but then I thought, "The

poor starving deer had nothing to do with this unpleasant situation, they certainly could not help it, so why should I take my anger out on them?"

Now, it happened that the warden that arrested me was one of the wardens who was supposed to help load hay at Austin. He knew I had hauled hay from Austin to the North Shore. The hearing was going to be held the following Thursday at Silver Bay. I called the judge to tell him that I just could not make it to Silver Bay for the hearing. The judge said he would do what he could for me. I received a letter from him saying that the fine stands at $104.

I truly was very upset about this incident, so I went into our local newspaper office, and they published an article in their paper about it.

In addition to my livestock hauling, I had done a great number of moving jobs in the past. I had once moved a lady's furniture and some things for her

A buck with unusually high antlers came into Earl Funk's yard for many years. Earl named him "High Boy."

sister. This lady now lived in California and her sister lived in New York. The lady from California wrote me a letter. She subscribed to *The Rush City Post* and had read the article. She wrote that at least that warden is hearing from people from across the United States! She had written the warden a letter from California and her sister had written a letter from New York.

"Deer Man" Earl Funk watched from his picture window as whitetails dined outside his home in the North Shore deer yard. About 58 deer depended on his handouts that year.

Deer coming into Earl Funk's yard to feed.

Along the North Shore, people call Lutsen's Earle Funk the "Deer Man." This picture shows why. Funk, an 81-year-old bachelor, has been providing handouts for white-tailed residents of the deer yard for 19 years. Last year he served 388 bales of alfalfa and 8,400 pounds of corn.

In 1972, Bronson purchased a new GMC 4 x 4 vehicle, so now we would ride in style when we went to Canada to hunt moose. Our group this year decided not to make the river trip but would hunt around Wolf Pup Lake and nearby areas. We found some fresh tracks but just could not see any moose. After hunting quite a few days in many different areas without getting a shot, we gave up and went home.

In the Fall of 1973, George Wegstein called me and asked if he could get a full load of hay and corn for his own use. He paid for half of it, and I furnished the other half. When deer season opened in November, Dr. Chauncey Kelsey and I decided to take George's load of feed up to him and stay overnight and hunt a little while we were up there. I asked George where I could find the warden that had arrested me. George replied, "It is pretty difficult to find him this time of the year as it is deer season." The next evening, I came out of the woods when it was getting dark. I had quite a ways to walk to our truck. As I

was walking along the road, a warden stopped me and wanted to see my hunting license. I replied, "You are the warden that arrested me!" I did the talking that night and I felt a lot better after I got a few thoughts off my mind!

That winter was not so bad as the recent winters had been, so we did not make very many trips with deer feed as the deer do not come for food until they get very hungry. Some deer come every year and come early, and then some deer do not come until they are very thin.

In 1973 we decided to try the Pagwa River again. We lined up two Indian guides and were going to try to take a long hunt this year to see if we could come up with some moose. When we arrived at Pagwa, our guides were down the river guiding other hunters so we had to wait almost a day before we would find two guides. When we did get the guides, we loaded our canoes and headed down the river. We set up camp at dusk and after a good supper crawled into our sleeping bags.

I learned through the night that my brother-in-law, Chauncey, was sick. In the morning he told me we would have to get him to a hospital. We had no choice but to load up again in the morning and head for Pagwa. We traveled up the river to the little village of Pagwa and then drove to Geralton. Chauncey was admitted to the hospital about 9:00 that night. After examining Chauncey, the small doctor came out and said to Bronson and me, "Shucks, boys, it is nothing serious. Get a motel for the night and go hunting around here in the morning."

Bronson and I were up early and had breakfast as soon as a restaurant opened. Then we went to the Ministry of Natural Resources in Geralton to find out where to hunt. They told us, "Why don't you go down the Gold Field Road? People are still getting moose there." So we headed right south of Geralton.

After driving a ways, we saw an old logging road going off to the West. I said it would be good to follow that road. I saw a fresh track cross the road so I told Bronson I would get out and hunt there. Bronson continued driving. I was more or less just standing and watching when I heard one shot, then two shots, and then a third shot. I was sure it was Bronson's 30-06 barking, so I followed his truck tracks until I came to his 4 x 4. Just then Bronson came out of the bush and gave me the wave. I knew he had something. He had got a cow moose and a calf. He had parked the truck right by a beaver dam as he could not go any farther with it and then he had walked in, so the moose were at least one-quarter of a mile beyond the truck.

We wanted to take the cow and calf home whole, but we were only two of us and we were not horses. We decided to give it a try. We put a rope on the cow, attached the rope to a good strong cross stick, and started to pull. The cow was heavy but we could move it a little way at a time. After many rests, we came to the beaver dam. We walked onto the dam and slid the moose in the water, so we finally got it to the truck. Now it was to go back for the calf. We were able to get the cow out so we knew we could get the calf out also.

By now we were good and hungry, so we stopped for some sandwiches and pop. It went quite easy to load the cow and the calf into the pickup so we soon were on our way to the hospital. Chauncey was feeling much better and would be released the next morning. We seemed to be having all kinds of difficulties hunting moose, but we all agreed we would keep on trying.

Bronson with his cow and calf.

The years seemed to roll by faster and faster. Now it was time to make plans for 1974. Chauncey could not be gone for more than a short time so he went to Geralton a day or two early to look around. Bronson and I were to join him and then hunt around Geralton for two or three days; then Chauncey would go home. I had bought a new Chevrolet 4 x 4 so this was its first trip. We camped East of Geralton. The first night we had a lot of snow. We found where someone had shot a cow and a calf. We could tell by the tracks. But we did not see any animals.

The second night we had a skunk visitor all night so Bronson did not get much sleep. As it turned out, the skunk did no harm. We hunted the next day without seeing anything so Chauncey decided to go home.

Bronson and I decided to try Pagwa River once more. We did not have much time either as both of us had a lot of work waiting for us at home. We were lucky and found both John and Albert Ruben (two brothers) who were going down the river hunting anyway, so we could go with them. We loaded all our supplies into the canoes and headed downstream. About 20 miles down the river, we met two young men with a small canoe with two bull moose racks and their equipment. They were really overloaded, and we asked them where the rest of the two moose were. They replied that they could take only a little

My new four-wheel drive pickup in 1974.

meat so they had to leave the rest. As it turned out, we found where they had shot both of the moose and had taken only the hind quarters. The meat would not be fit for us to take as they had just left it lay there.

Albert Ruben and I hunted upstream on the Kenagami River which came into the Pagwa River 40 miles down. John Ruben and Bronson were going the opposite direction. The Evinrude motor they were using broke down so they had to just stay in one spot and watch all day as we had the spare motor in our canoe.

When we got to camp that evening, Bronson served a delicious hotdish and we ate heartily and went to bed right away. The next morning I fixed breakfast, bacon, eggs, bread and butter, jam and coffee. I fixed 10 eggs for the four of us and asked if anyone wanted more. "Sure," John said. "I want more," replied Albert. So, I fixed 12 more eggs—22 all together!

The next morning we decided we better head back to Pagwa as we had to get home. About half way back to Pagwa, we could see two dark spots up on the bank. We were sure it was moose and soon one disappeared. The young bull was very curious, so, between Bronson and me, we had a bull moose again. I think it was Bronson that was the marksman that time also. We put the bull moose whole into the canoe. The trip upstream to Pagwa went very well as the water was high.

One more moose season had become history and again we had moose meat.

The following is a letter I wrote to the Governor of Minnesota, dated February 20, 1975.

"Honorable Wendell Anderson, Governor of Minnesota
State Capitol
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Governor:

A recent very unpleasant experience prompts me to write this letter in an effort to bring to your attention the lack of courtesy and cooperation on the part of some of our so-called public officials.

On Wednesday, January 15, 1975, I was driving South on Freeway 35 between Wyoming and Forest Lake when I noticed a very small deer standing in the brush on the West side of the freeway. It seemed to be standing motionless in the snow in spite of the heavy traffic passing by. Since it is illegal to stop on I-35, I kept going although I could not get out of my mind the picture of that helpless-looking deer.

On Thursday, January 16, I was again traveling South on I-35 and the deer was standing in the same place. I stopped my truck, backed up and got out to have a closer look at the deer. One hind leg was off at the knee. The deer took two steps, then just stood there offering no further resistance. I got back into my truck, delivered my load to South St. Paul, did not make any return load pickups, but hurried back to see what I could do for that little deer.

I stopped in Wyoming and told the State Patrol what was on my mind and what had happened. He called the game warden. I waited until almost dark before he arrived. His greeting to me was, "What's your problem?" I told him of the small deer that I had seen west of the freeway. He said he had already received a call about it and the deer was doing all right. At my insistence, he agreed to drive out to the freeway to look. A man from the Humane Society was with the Warden and they stood by their car while I crossed the fence to see if I could find the deer. By that time it was no longer in the place where I had seen it, and it was quite dark. I found the track and followed it a short way when the Warden called and said the deer took off fast and was all right. I wanted to see if, in fact, it was the same three-legged deer I had seen, so I followed the track a ways further. Then the Warden called out, "Come out of the woods. You are pushing that deer."

I walked to the fence and told him I would come out, but I wanted his name. He said he would give me a lot more than his name if that was what I was asking for. Again I repeated that I wanted his name and he repeated his words. I walked up to him and told him the deer I had seen had only three legs, was in a very weakened condition and would not survive the winter. He quickly responded with, "What do you want me to do about it—grow it another leg?"

I told him, "I have done nothing wrong and your are not going to get that sassy with me and get by with it." I offered to help catch the deer and to put it in our barn and care for it until the snow was gone and then they could do with it as they wanted. This has been done successfully in the past. The argument kept on and after a while he agreed to come back in the daylight to look for the deer. I asked him please to let me know if he found it. As yet, I have heard no word as to the condition of that deer.

Unfortunately, this senseless and provoking experience is similar to that which I have had with game wardens in the past. Each time I have talked with them about a situation which would seem to warrant their help, they not only have refused to help but have been antagonistic, abrasive and unnecessarily officious. Just what is the role of a game warden if not to help to protect the wild life?

In conversations with several other individuals who are concerned about our wild life, I have detected the same kind of feeling. We are willing to help save the wild life, but are met with constant resistance from the game wardens. For many years I have hauled hay and corn, at my own time and expense, for feeding the starving deer during the hard winters, and this has been frowned upon by the wardens. There are a number of people in the deer area along the north shore who have been supplementing the natural forage of the deer for years, any one of whom will vouch as to the dire necessity for additional feed for the survival of the deer during hard winters.

I guess my purpose in writing to you is to bring this matter to the attention of someone having responsibility, and to ask for a reason why this indifferent attitude is allowed to continue among our game wardens and, what, if anything, we as concerned citizens might do to gain the cooperation of our game wardens.

I will be awaiting your reply.

Sincerely,
Robert E. Lofgren

The following is a reply from Governor Wendell R. Anderson, dated March 26, 1975.

Dear Mr. Lofgren:

Thank your for your letter concerning a deer along I-35. It is my understanding that Mr. Ray Sanbeck, area conservation officer supervisor, contacted you concerning this matter.

If Mr. Sanbeck's discussion did not clarify your concerns, please contact Roger Lorenz, regional administrator, Department of Natural Resources in Brainerd.

With warmest personal regards.
Sincerely,
(signed) Wendell R. Anderson

I also received the following letters from Senator Jerald C. Anderson dated February 26, 1975 and Representative John T. Clawson dated March 3, 1975 relating to the above matter.

Dear Robert:

I appreciate your concern and the help you have given our animal wild life.

I share your views regarding the attitude of our officials. I hope the Governor gets a response from the proper Department of Natural Resources people on this matter.

Sincerely,

(signed) Jerry

Dear Bob:

Thank you for your brief note and the copy of the letter you sent to Governor Anderson. If this is an accurate reflection of what took place on the freeway, and I have no reason to believe it is not, I think that you do indeed have a valid complaint.

Though Governor Anderson has probably done the same, I have sent a copy of your letter to the Department of Natural Resources and, given the controversy I have had with them lately, I fully expect to get a reply. I will keep you apprised of further developments.

I am glad there are still people who can get interested in the problems of a three-legged deer.

Sincerely,

(signed) John

A State Supervisor from the Department of Natural Resources came to see us about this incident. I made sure our son and daughter-in-law and grandson Brian and our daughter and son-in-law were present when the State Supervisor came so they also could learn what he had to say. The supervisor told us when he was a warden in Northern Minnesota, he was feeding deer. His supervisor told him to do as they said or give up his job. He was advised not to feed the deer. He also told of another warden that was transporting feed for the deer in the trunk of the state car. That warden was threatened to be suspended from his job for doing this. I cannot understand any reason for these kinds of rules and regulations.

The East Central Minnesota Post-Review, dated March 13, 1975, contained several pictures of deer being fed, and the following article.

DEER FEEDERS SHARE ONE COMMON CONCERN

By Russ Goold

The truck carrying its precious cargo rolls up one hill and down the other side enroute to its destination.

"The authorities frown on this," the man says. "They say it does not help them."

"If it does not help them, then why do they always come for it?" the driver's fourth grade grandson asks.

The conversation might lead one to believe that desperate individuals in the truck are shipping guns to a radical group or carrying narcotics to area users.

Instead, they are concerned citizens taking feed to deer in northern Minnesota.

Bob Lofgren of rural Rush City has been helping feed the deer in northern Minnesota for more than ten years. Recently, his family and his son's family loaded up one of his trucks with more than $500 worth of hay and corn and again headed for the North Shore.

The feed was provided by Lofgren and Bronson Erickson, also of rural Rush City.

For Lofgren, the trip marked the second 400-mile trek he has made this year to feed deer between Two Harbors and Grand Marais. "I usually go more often, but I have not had the time this year," he says.

An almost cult-like group has arisen in northern Minnesota. It is the cult of deer feeders. And many of them eagerly await the feed that Lofgren provides so that they can continue feeding "their herds."

The first stop was at Vernon Hoff's, just north of Little Marais.

About 10 deer gathered in the yard scatter as the truck drives in. Hoff goes to the barn to get some shelled corn and spreads it around the yard. In five minutes, some 50 deer are blissfully munching on the corn, oblivious of the nearby humans.

Lofgren was just making a social visit. Later on, he would return and leave more corn and hay for the Hoff's deer.

Lofgren and his crew hit the road and head for Lutsen, where they deliver feed to several more deer feeders. Among them are two men in their 80's - reportedly some of the oldest deer feeders in the state.

One of the two, George Wegstein, has about 20 to 30 deer who routinely come to his place to find food. "He lives just for the deer," Lofgren says.

Wegstein picks up a pail of shelled corn and walks out into his back yard while the Lofgrens huddle in his shop and watch through the windows.

Wegstein's deer are more timid than Hoff's, but gradually they overcome the fear of all the people, and trickle down beside the man they all count on for food in winter. Wegstein stands with a big smile on his face, happily extending the feed from a small can in his hand, as the deer gingerly nibble the food.

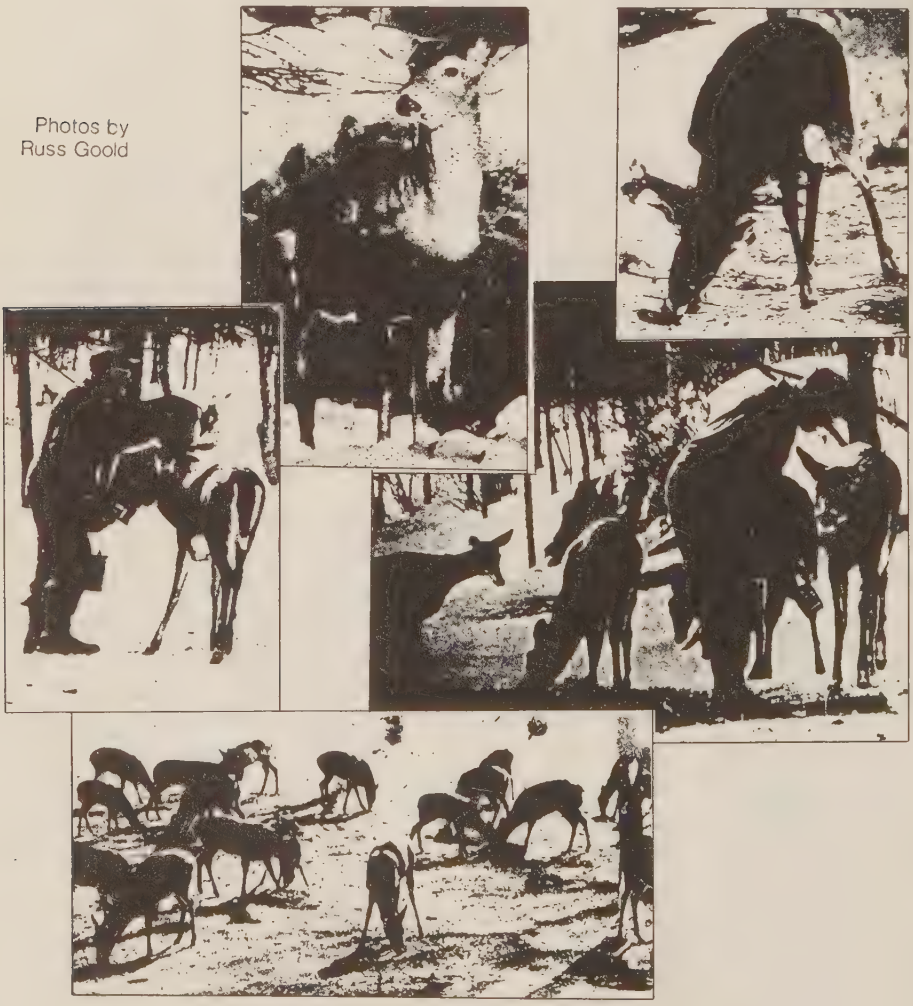
The next stop is with Earl Funk, the second of the old-timers, who has been feeding deer since 1953. About 40 deer regularly feed on Funk's lot, and a few years ago the Minneapolis Tribune did a feature story on him.

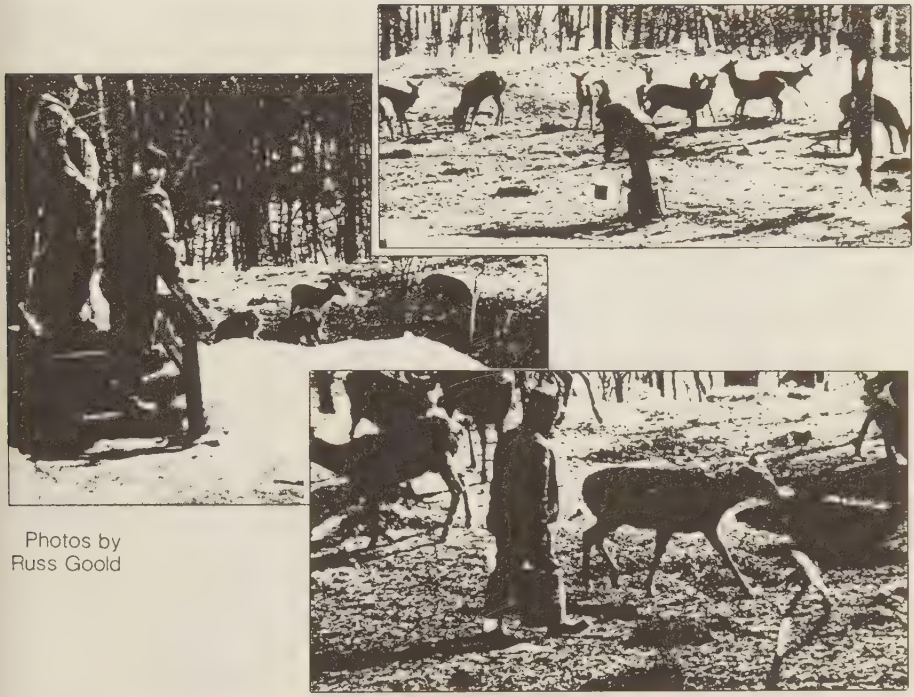
The popularity of deer feeding is growing, Lofgren says, and each year new faces appear to provide feed and ease the rigors of a hard winter.

For Lofgren, and for them, being part of the deer feeding "cult" is one of the most enjoyable pleasures in life.

It is perhaps what makes him return again and again each year.

Photos by
Russ Goold





Photos by
Russ Goold

A nice buck coming into Earl Funk's yard to have some hay and corn, 1972.

Two bucks fighting in Earl Funk's yard on the Caribou Trail, North Shore, 1972.

A Christmas card from George Wegstein, 1972.

The 1975 moose hunting season came and Chauncey Kelsey and Bronson Erickson and I decided to go North of Geralton and around Nakina. There were different zones or areas which they opened at different times. On our way up to Nakina, we got just a glimpse of two large moose by a small lake. By the time we could stop the pick-up and back up, the moose were gone.

After leaving Nakina, we saw this bull moose hanging up by a trailer house. An elderly man and his wife were staying there and he had shot this moose. I asked to have my picture taken with the moose.

We saw an Indian by his house and stopped to visit with him. He advised us to try the Kowkash River. He showed us where to put our canoe into the river and then he left us. We hunted the first day and saw nothing. The next morning, as we had only one canoe between us, I dropped off Chauncey along the river to watch, and I took Bronson in the canoe farther down the river where I left him to watch. I told the boys I was going to stop in our canoe on the river about half-way between them and try "moose calling." I had heard about calling moose ever since I started hunting, but had never seen or heard of any results. I had purchased a brand new Browning 308 gun as the price was very reasonable. The 348 gun was too valuable to be used for our hunting. The Browning 308 was a very nice gun. It was drizzling rain, so I kept the gun in the case to protect it.

I parked the canoe on the river and thought I would try calling. I gave one call and immediately the brush on the river bank began to crack. A large bull moose with only one antler poked his head out and took one look at me and was gone just as fast. Now I was just sick! I had heard that when you call you should be ready because when the moose comes, it will come fast. I picked up

Chauncey and Bronson and told them of my experience. Bronson said, "That makes a lot of sense – a $160 rifle and one $200 license. The next time Bob, have your gun outside the case!"

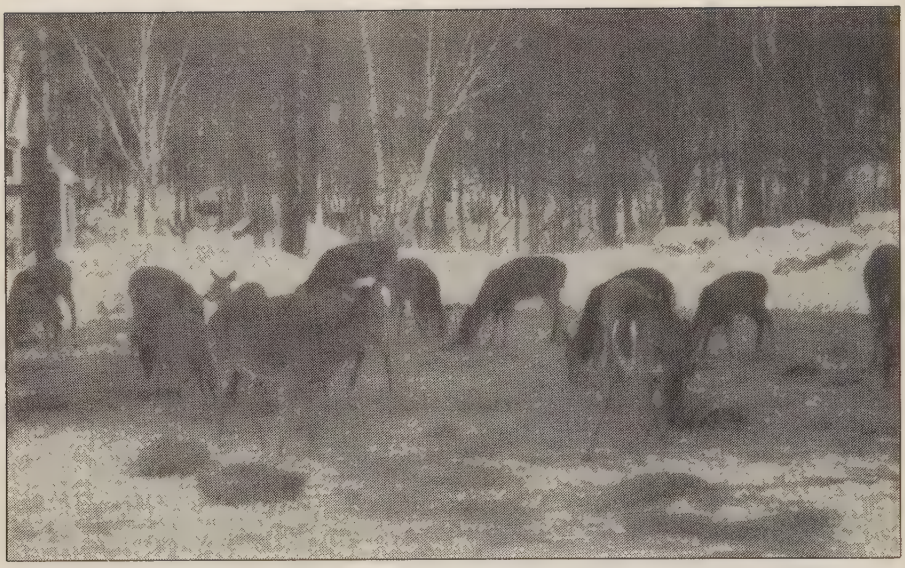
Further down the river we saw where someone else had shot a bull and a cow, but we were unsuccessful. Chauncey then left for home. Bronson and I went to the airport by Nakina. Hunters were returning by plane, having had the same empty luck that we had. Moose were indeed getting scarce.

On Sunday, January 18, 1976, we took a load of hay and corn to the North Shore. My wife Inez and our daughter-in-law Linnea and our two grandchildren, Brian and Tracy, and Linnea's father and mother came behind in a car. Linnea's father, Holger Warner, took these pictures.

Lofgren truck delivering feed to the North Shore, accompanied by Linnea, Brian and Tracy Lofgren, Inez Lofgren and Mr. and Mrs. Holger Warner, January 18, 1976.

Carrying feed for the deer, January, 1976.

Robert Lofgren carrying hay up to George Wegstein's shed on the North Shore. The hill was too steep to drive the truck up, January 18, 1976.



Deer having "nummies" in Vernon Hoff's yard on the North Shore, January 18, 1976. One time when I stopped at Vernon's yard, I counted 138 deer feeding.

Chauncey could not go hunting in 1976 so Bronson and I decided to try our luck on the Kabina River where we had taken so many large moose years ago. I had written to Mrs. Christine Ruben, who was Albert and John Ruben's mother, asking if she could get us a guide. She lined up Ernie Taylor as a guide for us as he was about the only guide available.

We took two canoes down the river, Bronson and Ernie in one, and I was alone in the other canoe. We went about 40 miles down to the post where the four rivers become one. We went up the Nagagomi River where we had shot the five bulls in 1961. Ernie and Bronson hunted together and I hunted alone. Again, I had the new Browning 308 with me and I had the foolish idea that the first bullet out of the barrel was going to get a bull moose for me. As usual, it was drizzling, and it was getting dusk, so I thought I better get back to camp and make supper.

I came around a bend in the river in my canoe and there alongside the water stood a nice bull moose. I kept going on the river, trying to get closer, and the moose started walking up to the woods. I was still quite a ways off, but I thought I would still have time to get the moose. He was getting fairly close to the woods so I thought, "now or never." I tried to pull the trigger and nothing happened. I quickly put in another shell, again tried to pull the trigger, and the same thing—no response. Then the moose was gone. Again, I was sick—two years in a row with the Browning and no moose with it!

I have a very large hand and I am used to a Winchester. The lever on the Winchester more or less snaps up into place, but, with the Browning, you have

to almost hold the lever to the stock. I was wearing gloves and my hands were quite cold which evidently was the reason for my failure to activate my gun as was necessary to get the moose. One should *not* be stingy like I was – saving on shells. If a person is unacquainted with the rifle he is using, he should shoot one or two boxes of shells for practice before going hunting so that you will know what to expect of your rifle. Bronson and Ernie had not seen any moose, so we had to go home with no moose. I again got a lot of razzing from Bronson about my new rifle.

During the 1976 deer season, I was at home on Saturday doing my chores when my son-in-law John Ploetz came and told me David had called and said there were two deer in the willows and long grass by his stock pond. I gave John my old 44-40 Winchester and I took my 32 special Winchester and we went over to son David's farm. Donnie Moulton was combining David's corn. The corn field was on all sides of the stock pond. My grandson Brian was riding on top of the combine watching to see if the deer would leave the area. His first words on our arrival were, "They are still in there, grandpa." David stood on the west side of the pond; it was not a large area. John stood on top of the combine on the east side and I was preparing to walk through and chase up the deer when John said, "This isn't fair; they don't have a chance." I looked at him and just smiled.

I was almost through the long grass and was thinking that they are not in here when, like a bolt of lightning, they took off. The doe went by David; he shot at the doe and then started running west toward the standing corn so I thought he must have hit that one. I looked to my left and the fawn was leaping high traveling southeast. I shot once and missed; shot again and missed. By that time the deer was quite a ways off so I quickly thought I have to lead it more. I led the deer quite a bit and at the third shot the deer went down. John shot at the same time. I am sure it was my bullet that hit the fawn because it went in at an angle and came out the other side, while John was shooting straight across and the 44-40 seldom went through a deer. David did not hit the doe. His wife Linnea was watching from their upstairs window and saw the doe run farther south across the whole field. We almost did not get either one of them.

When the 1977 moose hunting season arrived, both Chauncey and Bronson told me they could not go hunting, so I decided to go alone. It is 30 miles of bad road through the woods from Highway 11 up to Pagwa. Every hunter I met would ask me, "Are you all alone?" I would tell them "Yes," and they would reply, "Boy, you surely must like to hunt moose." I guess I had moose fever pretty strong.

When I got to Pagwa, I found John Ruben was available to be my guide. He wanted to go to Calstock for supplies for himself and for his Uncle Caleb Ruben. Caleb Ruben was the Indian who took Bronson and me back to camp the year our canoe hit the rock and we almost drowned, so I thought I owed him a favor. Going to Calstock meant driving back out the 30 miles of bad road and then 50 miles to Calstock. Caleb called his outboard motor "the kicker."

Caleb wanted his motor and his $100 bill from his sister (John Ruben's mother), but Caleb gave me strict orders not to give the money to John because he would spend it.

When we got to Forde Lake John Ruben asked if I could give him $2.00. I did not think $2.00 could do much harm, so I gave him the money. That night I learned how people can act when they get a little too much to drink. I wished I would have stayed at home the way things were going that night. The next day we headed down the river. The river was very shallow so we could not go more than about 20 miles down, as far as the limestone rapids. There were no fresh signs of moose so, after two days of hunting, I decided to give up and go home.

On the way back to camp, we met Albert Ruben and his Uncle Caleb Ruben with two men and their wives from Ohio. The said they had "lots of time" so were confident they would get a moose. One was a gunsmith and the other man was a "body man", as the gunsmith called him. I said "Oh, he works on cars, straightening them out or restoring them." The gunsmith replied, "Oh no. He is a doctor!" I could not help but remark to the doctor, "You are a doctor and you have a cigarette in one hand and a bottle of whiskey in the other!" I learned the next winter from the gunsmith that they had not had any luck in that 1977 hunting season either.

When we arrived in Pagwa, John Ruben wanted me to take him back to Calstock, so when we arrived at Calstock we drove up to the Kabina River, which was very low. I left the river about 12:00 noon. I was only 600 miles from home (Rush City, Minnesota) and I was home at 2:00 the next morning. That was a long drive alone but I had an urgent feeling that I was needed at home and, as it turned out, I was very much needed that morning. There were so many loads to be hauled and a shortage of drivers, so I went right out on a truck that morning.

This is another Christmas card received from George Wegstein. He said this little fawn was very hungry. It was very small and still had some spots, caused by inadequate feed. Thanks to George, the fawn had a good home.

It looks to me like this buck in George Wegstein's yard had a very good meal of hay and corn; and I don't think he died from it either!!

On June 8, 1978, we celebrated our 35th year in the trucking business. We served coffee, milk, rolls, doughnuts, cookies and ice cream all day at Brooker's Bakery in Rush City. I enjoyed the day very much. I am quoting the article in *The Post-Review* giving some interesting happenings in the history of the trucking business.

ROBERT LOFGREN: HE'S BEEN TRUCKIN' ALONG FOR 37 YEARS

By Jana Soeldner Danger

The new year will mark a big change for Robert Lofgren of Rush City. After owning a trucking business for almost 37 years, he is selling out to his two children, Dave Lofgren and Joanne Ploetz.

On June 8, 1977, we celebrated our 35th year in the trucking business. We served coffee, milk, rolls, doughnuts, cookies and ice cream all day at Brooker's Bakery in Rush City. I enjoyed the day very much.

The 35th Anniversary of our trucking business, June 8, 1978.

He does not intend to retire completely from the business. He will still drive for Dave and Joanne when he is asked, "But I am not going to shoulder all the responsibility any more," he remarked. "There is a lot of paper work and it is just getting to be too much. I would not have sold it outside the family though. My daughter and my son wanted it. I would not let it go out of the family," he repeated. "No way."

Lofgren began in the business on June 8, 1943, with a single truck. He was 23 and single, and his brother and he were farming together. He bought the trucking business from Charles E. Olson, who had started out with a Model T in 1921.

"We hauled mainly livestock then," Lofgren recalled. "But as the years went on, the family farm went out and more and more people went to the cities to work, leaving fewer and fewer farms." So Lofgren began branching out and hauling many different things.

In 1957, the state of Minnesota gave a number of older trucking lines, including Lofgren's, grandfather authority. "That means I can haul anything anywhere in Minnesota," he said proudly. "The only things I can't haul are people and petroleum." Now trucking firms must apply for permits to haul specific loads, he explained.

"I put in a lot of work and a lot of time," he remarked. "The reward is our authority. I can pass (it) along to blood relations.

"There have been some awful blizzards and a lot of slippery roads," he reminisced. In his early days of driving, roads were not sanded and were much more difficult to negotiate than today.

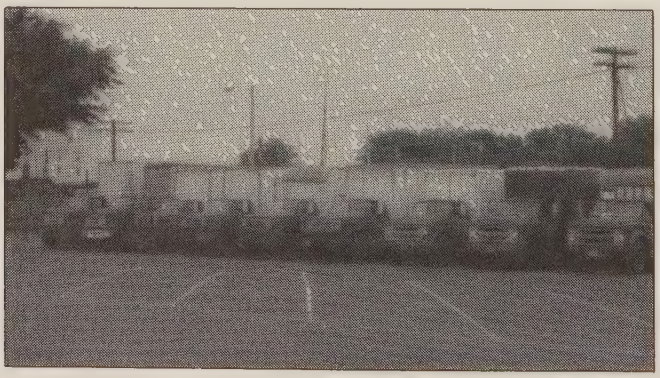
His original truck came without a heater, and because the country was fighting World War II, such items were difficult to find. He carried a bag of salt to keep the windshields free of frost and dressed to sit long hours in the cold. It was not until his second winter in the business that he finally located a heater and installed it in his truck.

In 1944, the year after he bought his trucking business, Lofgren made two more major changes in his life. He married his wife, Inez, and bought his own farm. He still farms and plans to continue. His love for the farm, in fact, was one reason for his early retirement. He had become so busy that he felt he had a choice between keeping the farm and keeping the trucking business. The farm won.

He raises a bit of everything: cows, pigs and chickens. "Otherwise it isn't a farm," he maintained.

"I've had enough of the busy highways." he continued. "I like to raise our own beef and pork, and I like to have our own milk and eggs."

By 1950, Lofgren had two trucks. Today he owns seven vans, two tractors and two trailers and one livestock truck. "Lately we have been adding a truck every year," he remarked.



In all his years of trucking, Lofgren was seriously injured only once. He was loading up a truck with livestock when the owner of the cattle remarked, "It's funny you never get hurt on this job." Lofgren told him he had been hurt several times, but never seriously.

Just after that, ironically, one of the cows broke away and the rope tied to its neck wrapped around Lofgren's thumb. The thumb was

broken and ripped open, but he did not have time to take care of it. "Who would have taken the load down?" he said. Instead of heading for the doctor immediately, he delivered his load and waited until that night to have a physician sew up the thumb.

Years ago, roads were almost as bad in spring as in winter. He remembers getting stuck in the mud with loads of cattle many times. "I don't think I ever called a wrecker," he mused. "But it takes a lot of shoveling to get your wheels out," he said.

He remembers a time when he would have to wait almost 24 hours to unload livestock in South St. Paul. But he misses the busy atmosphere there that he remembers from that time. Now, he said, there is far less activity in that area.

He also has many pleasant memories of his days on the road. "I used to drive alongside the steam locomotives just to hear them. I just love steam locomotives," he remarked fondly.

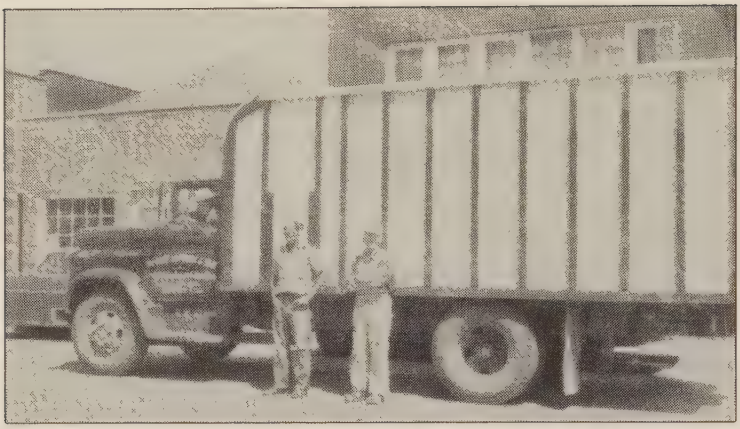
The time has gone quickly. He remembers an interchange he had years ago at the Harris Kaffe Stuga with an old trucker from West Rock. "I thought he had trucked forever and a day. I asked him, 'how long have you been trucking?' and he said 38 years. Now," he marveled, "I've done it for 37. Many, many times the going got rough and I was going to quit, but I never did. It seemed like a long time, and yet when I look back on it, it does not seem very long."

His route goes from the Twin Cities to Duluth. The day he spoke with the Post-Review, he had recently made a run up to the north shore of Lake Superior. The trip included a visit to an old business associate, now 87, who has a home on the north shore of Lake Superior where he spends his time feeding the deer. "That's his life," Lofgren remarked. The business day was not too busy to take time to stop and see an old friend.

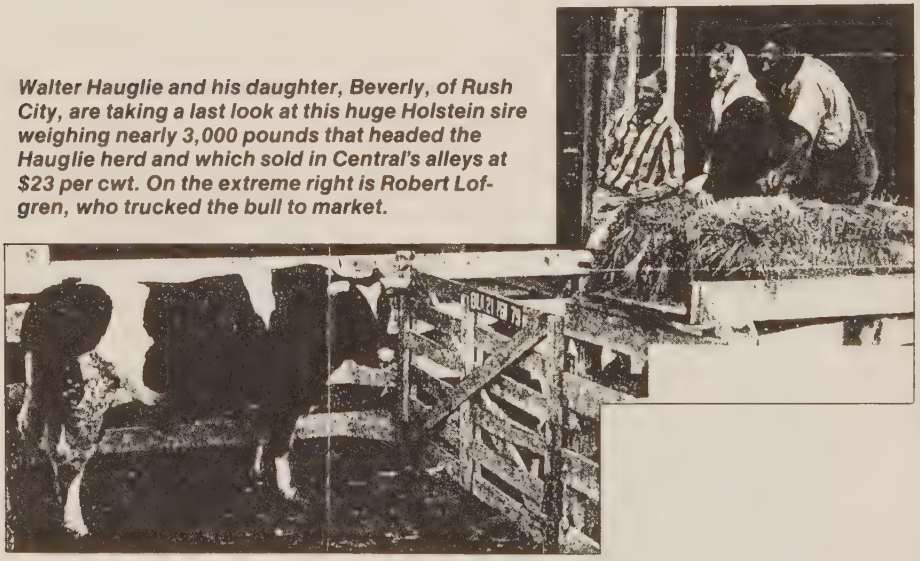
Except for an extra long moose hunt next fall, Lofgren has no special plans for his semiretirement. He is turning 60 and has decided it is time to slow down. He wants more time for himself and his wife. "Maybe I'll stay home and do a few things that need to be done."

He is glad that he has children to whom he can pass along the business. "They're anxious to get it," he said. Joanne learned to drive when she was eight, and Dave when he was seven. They started young, but it did not hurt them," Lofgren recalled.

He also has grandsons he hopes will some day get the business. For now, however, he will continue to help when he is needed. "I could never quit completely and sit in a rocking chair," he admitted.



This truck carried the largest load of pigs that I had hauled. It had 64 head weighing a little over 14,000 pounds. On the left is Ernest Swanson who raised the pigs and his helper Luke Carrier.



Walter Hauglie and his daughter, Beverly, of Rush City, are taking a last look at this huge Holstein sire weighing nearly 3,000 pounds that headed the Hauglie herd and which sold in Central's alleys at $23 per cwt. On the extreme right is Robert Lofgren, who trucked the bull to market.

The largest cow I hauled came from the Erwin Wendt farm. The cow weighed 2,005 pounds. The largest open heifer I hauled came from the Waldo Schultz farm, and it weighed 2,040 pounds.

The largest pig I hauled came from our farm; it weighed 920 pounds.

Chauncey decided to go with me moose hunting in 1978. Again, Mrs. Ruben had a guide ready for us. His name was "Zaki Bluff." We would try the Kabina River again. Zaki had built a cabin 40 miles down the river so we stayed in that, which was nice. Zaki caught two fish while we were on the river. When we returned to the cabin from the river, Chauncey carried the fish up to the cabin and laid them on the steps. I went into the cabin to change clothes. Zaki came in the cabin about two minutes later and asked Chauncey where he had put the fish. Chauncey said they were on the step. But, they were gone! Zaki said, "Fisher—sure." So there were animals around but we did not see them.

The second and third days I hunted alone without seeing anything. The third day of hunting, Chauncey and Zaki saw a cow and a calf moose, but missed them with their shots. So there was no moose meat this year either. It is always a long trip on the river and it is always good to get home.

Minnesota had another moose drawing in 1979 and our group was again eligibile to apply, so the same four of us applied—Dr. Chauncey Kelsey, my brother Carl, Bronson Erickson and I. I filled out the application and mailed it in Harris as I had done in 1971. One morning in August, 1979, I came in for breakfast and answered the phone a couple of times from down in our basement. Then I came up to the kitchen and the phone was ringing again. As I answered the phone, I heard it was Bronson calling, and at the same time I noticed a large brown envelope by my plate with the contents laying out and I saw the heading, "Dear Moose Hunter," so I said to Bronson, "What do you know?" Bronson quickly answered, "Give me two minutes and I will tell you all I know!" I told Bronson we had drawn our second Minnesota moose hunting permit. I was very, very thrilled. My grandson Brian had brought in the mail and, as my brother Carl would not be going with us, I told Brian he could come with us and hunt partridge.

We had applied for hunting this year in the same zone as in 1971 so we knew a little about the area in which we would be hunting. Bronson brought a moblie home along when he, Chauncey, Brian and I left for hunting so we stayed in that. Oral Benson from Tofte joined us just to be with us. When we got to our hunting destination, I found what I thought was a moose trail so I decided to take cover and try moose calling again. I did my best and a short while later I heard an answer. After waiting patiently, Bronson and Oral stepped into an opening in the woods. They had heard me and thought it was a moose calling; I had heard them and thought it was a moose! We did not see anything Saturday or Sunday. Them we had to go home but hoped to return to this area the next weekend.

The next week Bronson went up Thursday night and hunted all day Friday; I drove up Friday night. We both hunted all day Saturday without seeing anything.

Sunday morning we got out before daylight and right away I saw a moose on the road at a distance. The moose was too far away and it was too dark to

shoot, but I had seen a moose! It had rained so the road was soft. After traveling down the road a ways, I turned around to return to our camp and on the way back there were four fresh tracks along the road. I decided to spend the day right there. A few minutes later, I spied a very large cow moose in the alders. I wanted a bull, but time was running short so, as long as it was such a large cow, I would take it. I was using my 348 Winchester now so I was hoping for better luck than with my Browning 308. I drew bead and fired. The moose seemed to disappear, but I could see some brush move and a dark spot so I fired the second time. I made my way through the tangled mess of windfalls and there was the large cow.

I realized when I was dressing out the cow that I was getting old. I never minded dressing out a moose before, but this time it was more of a task. As soon as I was finished with that job, I hurried to find Bronson as we did not want two moose. It happened that Bronson had seen three moose in the thick brush but was being choosey as he wanted to get one with antlers. Before he knew it, the three moose were gone, so luck was with us in that Bronson had not shot a moose also.

Grandson Brian was disappointed that he was not with us this weekend when we got the moose, but I promised him that as soon as he was through school, he could go with me to Canada.

Mr. and Mrs. "Moose Hunter" by our cow moose in Rush City, 1979.

Bronson Erickson and his son, Thad, with our cow moose.

My cow moose, taken in 1979.

Robert Lofgren, left, and Bronson Erickson, right, with the cow moose taken in Minnesota, 1979.

I was now 59 years of age and would be 60 on December 31, 1979, so I debated with myself for a long time: shall I sell the farm or the trucking business? I decided to sell the trucking business to my son David and daughter Joanne in December 1979. In February, 1980, they took over the trucking duties.

The nineteen hundred and eighty hunting season was here now and Ontario came out with a new law. Two hunters must each buy a license, but could take only one moose. Both hunters must put their tags on the one moose. No one was interested in going with me, and, as I could not go alone, I just gave it up. As usual, I was very busy with the farm work and the trucking business.

Then came deer hunting in November, 1980. My grandson Brian was going to hunt with me. I told him on Sunday, the second day of the season, that we would go around Cloverton and Kingsdale as we used to hunt there previous years. We had just driven past Cloverton when we noticed a deer cross the road. I told Brian, "That deer is wounded. I can tell by the way he runs." Brian found his track and, sure enough, there was a little blood. We waited a while and no one seemed to be following the deer and there was no snow, so I told Brian we would try to trail the deer. We took our packsacks and started into the brush. Shortly we jumped him. I was very excited. I said, "Brian, take him," as Brian had not yet shot a deer. Brian could not see him, so I took a quick shot and of course missed him. He left a few blood drops but they were high on the brush and on both sides of the track. I could not figure out where he was hit. Soon we found a piece of bone two different places. I still did not know where he was hit.

We started trailing about 10:30 a.m., and it was now 3:00 p.m. I was very tired so I told Brian I had to stop to eat. After a few sandwiches, cookies, candy and pop, we got new energy. I told Brian to watch and I would make one last circle. I found a trail leading through long grass with water in it. I thought, "I bet he went through here." I followed the trail and, sure enough, up in the brush I saw the deer laying down. I whistled for Brian and he came and shot him in the neck. The hunter who had shot at the deer had hit and shattered the lower jaw. That was why the blood on the brush was sometimes high and sometimes real low.

It was now quite a bit after 3:00 and very cloudy. We dressed out the deer. We had no idea just where we were so I told Brian we would have to depend completely upon our compass. Brian thought the road we came in on ran East and West, but, having hunted this area before, I knew it ran North and South. We took a compass reading and sighted for a tall tree and started to drag the large buck. We had not brought even a rope with us, so we had to hold onto the buck's antlers. We went through swamp in water above our knees; we could not see to go around the water. Each time we would reach our tall tree we would light a match, read our compass and look for another tall tree against the sky. It seemed forever when we spotted a yard light. I told Brian to take the two rifles and head for the yard light and see if he could find the pickup. I told Brian if he found the pickup, to start the motor and leave it running so

it would be good and warm because our legs were cold. I said I would drag the buck and head for the yard light also.

Pretty soon I heard Brian whistle while he was coming back to meet me He had come out within a hundred feet of the pickup. He said a partner of the hunter who had shot at the buck was waiting out there He had asked Brian, "Did you get him?" Brian told him we did and that it was a dandy. The man said his partner wanted to see where he had hit the buck. I told Brian that if the other hunters wanted the buck, they could have him because they had wounded him. We drove to their camp and the hunter looked at the buck and said all he had was a head shot. I told him he could have the buck but he said, "No, you have earned him. I am just glad he did not have to go to waste " Brian was just 15 years old and on the way home, I told him that was as good a hunting lesson as any 15 year old boy could have.

The next morning I was just doing my chores when the barn telephone rang. A voice said, "Hello, Grandpa. How are you? I got 'him'!" It was Brian. He had gone out in their woods on a stand that he had made and shot a nice two-point buck. That was a real good hunt for both of us.

Robert Lofgren and grandson Brian in Robert's yard, with two bucks taken in 1980.

Through the winter of 1980-1981, I hauled some feed to the North Shore, and also people from up there came to our place to get hay and ear corn. I have always enjoyed seeing deer being fed when the snow is deep on the ground.

A Christmas card from George Wegstein.

In the fall of 1981, I thought I should have more time to go hunting but, as I was still doing some driving for our children, it seemed I was still busy. Ontario still had the same "two-hunters, one-moose" law so, again, I let the season go by.

Our deer hunting did not amount to much in November 1981 either. It seems some years you just cannot find any game. As I have mentioned before, I have not been so lucky as some hunters; some never miss getting their deer. I did shoot the first deer on our farm since we lived here.

The following is an article, with pictures, published in the Lake County News-Chronicle on March 10, 1982.

OH DEER, OH DEER, OH DEER!

By Gloria Hammerstrom

One hundred ninety-eight bales of alfalfa and 1,600 pounds of corn were ready for the annual deer migration.

They started arriving in November, the day after deer hunting season ended, and will not leave until this coming April or May.

The does will give birth to their fawns after they leave in the spring, and the bucks will again grow the racks of horns they had shed over the winter.

Approaching the home of Vernon and Virginia Hoff of Little Marais, there is no hint of the breathtaking sight of more than 100 deer roaming free.

right, quick now: how many deer are there in this picture taken near the Vern Hoff residence, Little rais. Count them and multiply by two to get the approximate number that often show up at feeding e at the Hoffs'. (photo by Gloria Hammerstrom)

A small valley lies nestled behind the Hoff home. From there, a hilly expanse of woods stretches half a mile farther to the lake. Situated in the center of the small valley is a small metal replica of a red barn, which is used to store alfalfa and corn.

The deer roam and bed down free, without fences or borders to restrict their movement. The forested area is their private domain, but upon closer examination, deer are everywhere and seem more to be the observers than the observed.

Vernon recalled how his family got involved in feeding the deer, which was almost by accident: "In 1967, we bought a snowmobile and with my sons went out in the woods to find a Christmas tree. We found a nice cedar tree, and while dragging back to the house, some of the boughs broke off. When we looked back, the deer were following us right on in and eating the cedar boughs."

"It was then we started cutting boughs for the deer, and we have been feeding them every year since then," Vernon said.

He started feeding about 25 deer with five bales of hay but now feeds them alfalfa and corn. The number of deer has steadily increased from 25 to the present total of about 127.

Besides Vernon and Virginia, there are four Hoff children: Vaughn, Vane, Vern and Vicky.

"We lived in Silver Bay for three years, then moved to our present home in Little Marais and have lived here for 24 years," Virginia said.

Listening to the Hoffs talk about the deer, the love they have for them is very apparent.

Vern Hoff goes about his regular chores of feeding the deer that gather near his residence.

Wouldn't you like to reach out and pet this friendly deer? (photo by Gloria Hammerstrom)

The Hoffs agreed their favorite was a deer named "Floppy Ears."

Vernon recalled: "She had been shot through the ear and the bullet hole was plainly visible. The bullet passed through one ear and then must have hit the other ear, causing it to flop permanently. I remember once, just before she left in the spring, she was pregnant and was so big that you could actually see the fawns kicking around inside her."

Virginia spoke sentimentally: "Floppy Ears was always the last deer to leave in spring, and in November she was always the first to return. When she came back, it was just like one of the kids coming home."

Floppy Ears came back to the Hoffs every year for about 10 years, but then stopped coming two years ago. The Hoffs could only speculate as to what happened to her: "She may have died of old age."

In years past, the deer would come right up to Vernon and eat out of his hand. This year, though, he describes the deer as being "very skittish," and they no longer will get as close as they used to. He attributes this to the possibility of there being an increase in the number of wolves preying on deer.

One wolf recently attacked and killed a deer just a short distance from their home. Vern said: "The wolves are getting pretty brave when they will attack a deer this close to the house."

Each year, Vernon takes a truck on a 325-mile trip to Nielsville, Minnesota, to haul corn for the deer.

Bob Lofgren, who owns a trucking firm in Rush City, also plays a large part in the feeding of the deer. At his own expense, he hauls up corn for the deer. He has done this for many years and brings the corn not only to the Hoffs, but to many other people along the shore who also feed deer.

"We always like to have enough food on hand for the deer so they can eat what they want," Vernon said.

The harsher the winter, the more deer come to the Hoffs for food. Virginia was reluctant to divulge the cost of feeding the deer over the past 24 years, as she said it never figured in as to the Hoffs' reasons for doing what they do.

Almost as if they can read a calendar, the deer start returning the day after deer hunting season is over.

"I never put food out to draw the deer back in November. They just come," Vernon said. He added, though, that sometimes he feeds a few apples to the deer as a treat when they first return.

"The woods are full of racks of horns after the deer start shedding them, but they don't stay there long. Chipmunks, rodents, squirrels, fox and porcupines eat them, and find them to be a delicacy because of the high content of calcium. In a hard winter, deer will migrate from a radius of approximately eight miles," said the Hoffs' son, Vern.

"As spring approaches, many of the deer will frolic in the front yard like little puppies," Virginia said. "People driving along the highway will stop and watch, and some will drive into the yard. Many are awestruck when they see well over 100 deer free and roaming around."

A man from Iowa stopped some years back and was watching Vernon hand-feed the deer. Said the Iowan: "I've got a herd of cows at

home, that are supposed to be tame, and I can't even get them to do that."

On the day of this interview, Vernon was one day away from retiring from Reserve Mining after working there for 29 years.

Before he arrived home, there were about 20 deer in the feeding yard, but many more were visible in the woods. As Vernon's truck pulled into the yard, dozens of deer made their way to the feeding yard.

He scattered the feed around. The lush green of the alfalfa, and the bright yellow of the corn showed dramatically against the fresh snow. Vernon did a quick head count and said there were 72 deer at that particular time feeding, with more still coming out of the woods.

"Most people think all deer look alike, but they have special characteristics of their own that make them easily identifiable," Vernon said.

The Hoffs have a large deck on their home which overlooks the feeding yard. They spend a lot of time deer-watching.

During winter they have one of the most unusual and scenic backyards along the North Shore.

Nineteen Eighty-Two came and I had already missed two hunting seasons so, before I knew it, the season had opened and gone by. I thought I was going to have more time now, but I could tell age was creeping up on me fast. I did shoot a deer over in Brian's woods, but Brian and Chauncey Kelsey were not lucky.

This is a picture of me with the girl who was with the group sailing across the Atlantic Ocean on the Hjemkomst in 1983. This picture was taken in Stillwater, Minnesota on September 17, 1983. I had watched them on TV when they sailed out of New York. At that time I told my wife, Inez, that I wished they would not go—that they would all drown. And then to have my picture taken with her later on!!

I think I made only one trip to the North Shore with deer feed, as the year before people had come from up there to our place for hay and corn.

The 1983 moose season in Ontario was coming close. My grandson Brian and my second-cousin Merle Lofgren wanted to go with us, and Dr Kelsey wanted to make one more trip. Ontario had a new ruling that nonresidents must go through a tourist outfitter to get validation tags to buy their moose licenses. I called many outfitters around different zones I finally found one bull tag at Indian Point Camp, south of Dryden in Zone 8 I had not hunted that area before but we decided to try it. We hunted a lot of area without seeing anything.

Grandson Brian, Robert Lofgren and Dr. Chauncey Kelsey, 1983.

Grandson Brian and Robert Lofgren tying down two canoes on our truck and Dr. Chauncey Kelsey looking on, 1983.

We were soon ready to go home when Merle did get a moose. Merle was sitting on the edge of a swamp and the moose came out a long ways away. Merle had been in the Marine Corps and had received a medal for sharp-shooting, and I think that helped him. We took the moose out of the area by canoes.

Grandson Brian, "The Old Moose Hunter" and Merle Lofgren with Merle's moose, 1983.

Merle Lofgren examining the heart of the moose taken in 1983 to determine where the bullet had pierced it.

"The Old Moose Hunter" and grandson Brian taking Merle's moose out, 1983.

Brian and I hunted around home in 1983 and the deer seemed to play with us. We had very long shooting and could not hit the deer. I was going to hurry through Brian's woods and sneak up on four deer out in the hay field. I got so out of breath I was sure I had advanced to 90 years old. The deer were gone when I reached the field, and we did not hunt any more that year.

Brian and I went North with a semi load of freight the day before Thanksgiving. It was snowing when we left Rush City, and the snow came down harder and harder. We had a great number of stops. We were trying to get to Moose Lake when we found cars stuck in the middle of Freeway 35. In trying to get around one car, Brian slipped off the blacktop. The tractor only spun the wheels.

The only equipment we had with us was a large windshield scraper. I got down on my knees and scraped the snow away down to the gravel and then to the blacktop, inches at a time. We finally got onto the road again. We picked up several stranded motorists and put them in the trailer. I gave them strict orders not to touch anything as among the freight were several hundred cases of liquor. We gave up at Moose Lake, turned around and headed home. Brian did a very good job driving and we made it home safely. Needless to say, both of us were completely exhausted. As usual, my chores were waiting for me when I got home.

The next day was Thanksgiving Day and, as every Thanksgiving, we enjoyed the best of food.

Thanksgiving Day morning, I went to our second barn to get all the cattle inside. I saw where I had jumped two deer but did not see them. I thought I

should get my rifle and go after them but it was all I could do to lift my feet through the deep snow, so I gave it up.

It was the Thursday after Thanksgiving when David asked me if I could deliver some freight to Cloquet and then go to Virginia for a load. I did my chores and left for Cloquet. I had some very large and heavy rolls of carpet and it seemed I had no strength. I just could not move the freight like I had in the past. I delivered liquor to several places. I told the proprietor that I must really be getting old. I drove north to Virginia and picked up my load. It was a long drive home and quite late when I did get home. I had supper and rested a while. I told Inez not to wait up for me because it would take me a long time to do chores. I finally came in at 20 minutes to 1:00 in the morning. I thought that as soon as I got to bed I could sleep and get some rest - but I could not sleep or lay still at all.

At 4:40 a.m. I told Inez we better drive down to see Dr. Chauncey Kelsey. We had a nice 1983 Buick Park Avenue so it was a nice ride down. Chauncey barely looked at me and then called Dr. Craig to be ready for me at Bethesda Hospital as he was bringing me there. I was placed in intensive care immediately. The nurse told me eight hours more and I would not have been here. My family came down to see me on Saturday and I was doing better.

Now, there were two barns full of livestock and no one to take care of them, so I told my family to dispose of all of them as soon as possible. It was depressing to think of all of them going, but it had to be done. When my grandson shook hands and said, "Good-bye," I said, "Brian, we will hunt again."

I was in the hospital for eight days and then the doctors sent me home with all my bottles of pills to take. One time the nurse came with a cup of pills; I counted them and there were thirteen.

Now I was home and the barns were empty and everything was cold and frozen. It was a lonesome feeling. I told Inez I was going to drive around the country and see if I could find any sign of deer to feed. I had never fed any deer around home before. I had found a good deer trail and was putting hay and corn out when a neighbor, Clarence Harer, stopped to visit. He said they were cutting wood and every night deer would come and clean off the tops of the trees. I asked him if he minded if I would feed them. He said he would not mind, but the snow was very deep and his snow blower made a track just the width of a pickup truck. I have a four-wheel drive so I was sure I could make it. I made it into the woods fine, put ear corn and hay out, and parked at a distance so I could watch. It was getting dusk. Pretty soon a little fawn came to eat and then more and more deer. I have always enjoyed watching the deer eat when they are so hungry. I continued to do this every so often.

We had a telephone call from Oral Benson near Tofte on the North Shore that George Wegstein had died. His funeral was going to be on Saturday morning. Inez and I got up very early that morning so we could be there in time for George's funeral. George was one of the best deer feeders on the North

Shore. The deer were really going to miss him. At the funeral I was asked if it were possible for me to bring some feed to the North Shore. I said I would bring a load the next week. I had help loading the corn and hay and delivered it to George Wegstein's area. George was also a very good gunsmith. He repaired several guns for me, including a 308 Savage on which the stock had been cut off. He did an outstanding job of lenghtening it. He was re-doing a 45-70 Winchester that I tried to buy every time I brought feed, but George would just laugh. After George died, I tried to locate the gun without any success. I really would like to have bought it.

The last Christmas card received from George Wegstein.

I kept a little busy each day. The snow was very deep so I cut some wood right along the road. We used the wood to heat the shop at my son David's place where they worked on the Lofgren trucks.

On Sunday, February 12, 1984, Inez and I had dinner at the Grant House in Rush City. I had a regular dinner. It was my brother Carl's birthday the next day, February 13, so we went to their home to celebrate his 66th birthday, Sunday afternoon. During the afternoon, I felt very uncomfortable. It was time for lunch, but I said I did not think I could eat anything. Chauncey came to me to take my pulse. After a couple of minutes, I asked him how it was. He said, "I can not find any." Chauncey had lunch and then came back to me. I asked him, "What is it doing now?" He said it was very weak and irregular.

Inez and I went home and I went to bed early and stayed in bed late in the morning. Inez always starts washing every Monday morning at 6 o'clock. She was almost finished with the washing and I was still in bed when the telephone rang. It was Dr. Cermak. He told me he wanted me to come to Bethesda Hospital immediately. I told him I was doing all right; I was resting a lot. He said I

should come right away as he did not want me to be coming in the middle of the night. Again, Inez drove me to Bethesda Hospital. I was given drugs and more drugs. Nothing seemed to do much good.

This was February 13, 1984 and the first part of March, Dr. Cermak asked me what I thought of heart surgery. I told him he was the doctor; anything was O.K. with me. On March 6, the doctors did a quadruple bypass on my heart. I mentioned before that I had been in the hospital. Of my three hospitalization experiences, the first with undulent fever was the hardest; then the back surgery next; and the heart surgery was the easiest. I know how medical treatment has improved over the years.

I came home on March 16. I rented out most of the farm land, but planted one field of oats and two fields of corn.

The reason I wrote this information in detail about my illness is that it may help someone else in the future. If one is unusually tired and gets very short of breath when walking fast or running, get a thorough medical examination. I thought I was just growing old rapidly.

Now the 1984 moose season was drawing close. Most of my family advised me not to go; but Brian, and Merle Lofgren, wanted to go. I contacted the Constance Lake Indian Band 92 at Calstock and finally arranged for two

Brian Lofgren, "The Old Moose Hunter" and Merle Lofgren getting ready to go moose hunting in 1984.

Getting ready to go hunting, 1984. My grandson Brian Lofgren, "The Old Moose Hunter," and Merle Lofgren with his three children—Jennie and Jerry (twins) and Joey.

Indian guides, two bull tags and one cow tag. The Indians did not meet us where we had agreed to meet, so, after much driving and about a day and a half delay, we arrived at Pagwa River. The river was very low. One guide was Zaki Bluff. He had guided Chauncey and me before. The other was George Ferris, who was quite aged and did not see very well.

I wanted one guide for Merle and one for Brian so we would not have any more mishaps. Neither Brian nor Merle had traveled the river before. We left the landing with our canoes loaded. I ran my own canoe, the twenty-one footer. We would get in the shallow rapids and I would have to get out and pull the canoe. It also wanted to turn crossways and was very difficult to straighten out. I really wondered what I was doing there, but, then, I knew I really liked to hunt moose!

We came by a camp that had a young bull hanging up and farther down, as it was getting dusk, we pulled up to shore to set up camp. There were two young Canadians there also. They had a very nice bull. They took my picture with it in their canoe. We could only go as far as the limestone rapids. The Indians said it was too hard on their canoes to cross the limestone rapids. I was sitting on the shore watching when I saw three dark objects come out to the river a long ways down. I tried to travel down there quietly, but they disappeared. I sat for a long time where I thought the animals had come out but nothing showed up.

While I was sitting there I heard a shot way down the river, then—two, three, four, five, six, seven, and eight shots. Later that afternoon, four young hunters

Brian and Merle Lofgren with the moose taken by Canadian hunters in 1984.

Canadian hunters with their moose in a canoe, 1984.

and three canoes came up the river. I said, "You shot eight times." "Yes," he said. "The bull was a long ways off and I thought I would never get him. It was a **very** nice rack. One of their canoe motors had quit functioning, so they were towing that one canoe. I gave them some lunch. They cleaned the spark plug on the motor which then started. They said they had shot one moose farther up the river when they were on their way down.

Brian Lofgren and Merle Lofgren with two Canadian hunters and their moose, 1984.

Robert Lofgren with the moose taken by the Canadian hunters in 1984.

Later we learned that they shot two more moose on their way to the landing. The three of us saw nothing, so that shows how luck runs in any kind of hunting. After hunting about five days, we headed back upstream to the landing. Everything went well, but it was a long trip home without having fired a shot.

L to R: George Ferris, Brian Lofgren, Zaki Bluff and Merle Lofgren. Eating lunch on the river bank, 1984.

Deer season opened in November. Brian and I and our neighbor, Ron Hestbeck, hunted together. We stayed pretty close to home. I put Brian and Ron on stands in our pasture and I had permission from the neighbor to drive his woods nearby. I chased a buck and a doe out. Brian got the doe and Ron nicked the buck. We followed him through the corn field, but found just a drop or two of blood.

I was now feeling pretty good and was getting very lonesome for livestock. I went to Dr. Cermak for a checkup and told him I wanted some cattle around. He thought that would be all right, just so I did not overdo it. Just before Christmas I went to a South St. Paul livestock auction and bought a little more than enough livestock to fill one side of the barn. In the spring I went to auctions and bought the cheapest and thinnest young stock available. I knew I could feed them and make nice cattle out of them. I did not rent out the farm that summer; I planted most of it myself. Putting up hay was difficult, but Inez drove the tractor on the baler and I took my time.

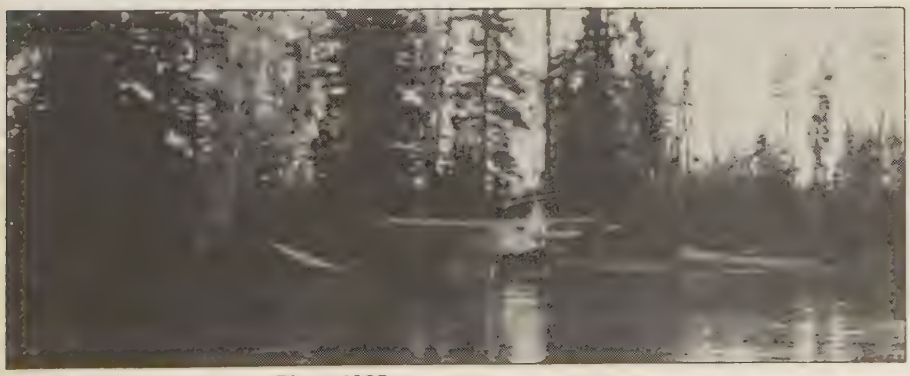
We were discussing our plans for the 1985 moose season. Merle Lofgren wondered if he could bring his friend Glen Holmstrom along. I said it would be all right with me. Brian discovered he had to go to his fiance's brother's wed-

ding that weekend. He was very disappointed I told him that the two of us would go moose hunting the following week. He agreed to that

Merle and Glen bought a canoe and a tent. Glen borrowed one of my sleeping bags. I had my large canoe and two 5½ horsepower motors Merle and Glen had a six horsepower motor I had arranged for two bull and one cow tag through the Constance Lake Indian Band 92 We finally had everything loaded. Merle and Glen came in their pickup and I was alone in mine

The one Indian guide met us at Pagwa as planned His name was Ernie Taylor, and he had guided Bronson and myself before Caleb Ruben was also with him and had had a little too much to drink. He called me some names and said I was a minister. I told him I was not a minister – I just did not drink

Getting ready to go down river to hunt moose, 1985.



An airplane on the Pagwa River, 1985.

The Pagwa River was very high so we were sure we would have easy going. We made the 40 miles easily in a day down to where the Kenagami River comes in. We were able to set up camp before dark. Merle and Glen put up their tent and we put up my small one for Ernie. There was a framework already there which I covered with plastic for the cook shack. I slept in my sleeping bag in there. I made a table out of some small poles and a couple of boards I found. We had plenty of food for supper and we all went to bed.

Our "home" during moose hunting, 1985. Note the kerosene lantern on the tree. We leave the lantern burning all day so there will be light to lead us home when coming home in the dark.

Merle Lofgren and Glen Holmstrom setting up their tent, 1985.

Of all the moose hunting trips I have made, I have never heard much of any sounds at night. I once asked our guide Alex Stephens if he ever heard any sound from moose or other animals at night. "Not ver much," he answered.

Breakfast was long before daylight. Ernie, Glen and Merle went down the English River. From where the Pagwa River and the Kenagami River come together, it is called the English River. I went upstream on the Kenagamiu. Merle and Glen insisted on running their own canoe. Ernie had his large canoe. It was about mid-morning; I was sitting on shore watching when I saw them coming. I asked them if they had one. Merle said, "Yes, we got a nice bull, a nice one." I went back with them and looked at it, and it was a good one.

Ernie Taylor and Glen Holmstrom with their moose on the Pagwa River, 1985.

Glen Holmstrom; spike bull; my canoe, 1985.

Glen Holmstrom and "The Big One" on the Pagwa River, 1985.

Ernie Taylor, the Indian guide, and Merle Lofgren with "The Big Bull," 1985.

After some lunch, we each went to our same river again. I went upstream slowly and then towards evening headed back to camp to make supper. I had supper about half-ready when Ernie came running up and said, "We got another one. We need a tag." This one was a spike bull. Ernie saw the cow also, but I guess the boys did not see her. First day - two moose. That was more than good.

Merle Lofgren with a spike bull on the Pagwa River in 1985.

"The Old Moose Hunter" with Merle Lofgren and Glen Holmstrom's moose in 1985. The island in the middle of the river is where Bronson Erickson and I stayed with the Swiss hunters when we almost drowned in 1970.

Merle Lofgren, Ernie Taylor and "The Old Moose Hunter." Two moose loaded in 1985.

Glen Holmstrom, Ernie Taylor (our guide) and "The Old Moose Hunter." Parts of two moose in my 21-foot canoe, 1985.

"The Old Moose Hunter" had a hand in getting this bull, 1985.

Now we had both bull tags filled and needed a cow. We could have had three bull tags, but who even thought we would see three bulls! As it turned out, we never did get the cow, but we could have shot seven bulls. I had never ever seen anything like that. We got to see a bull moose run out of the river into the bush. We also saw a bull, cow and calf on the island. We had no chance for a shot at the cow and I was glad because I do not like to shoot the cow and leave the calf. Likewise, I do not like to shoot the doe and leave the fawns

A bull moose we could have shot in 1985, if we had another tag!!

On the Pagwa River, another moose that could have been ours, 1985.

When we were going to leave camp to start our trip up the Pagwa River, it was very frosty and foggy. My motor did not start right away so I was a little behind Merle, Glen and Ernie. When they turned from the Kenagami River up onto the Pagwa River, a bull moose was swimming across the river. Ernie almost touched it with his oar. I missed seeing that one. It was thrilling for the boys.

Later I heard my neighbor had told his father, "If they do not get moose when Glen Holmstrom goes with them, they might as well quit as Glen is so lucky."

The boys had already quartered the large bulls. I was quite disappointed, as I would like to have taken them home in one piece.

Our Pagwa River moose hunt, 1985.

Merle Lofgren coming up the Pagwa River in 1985.

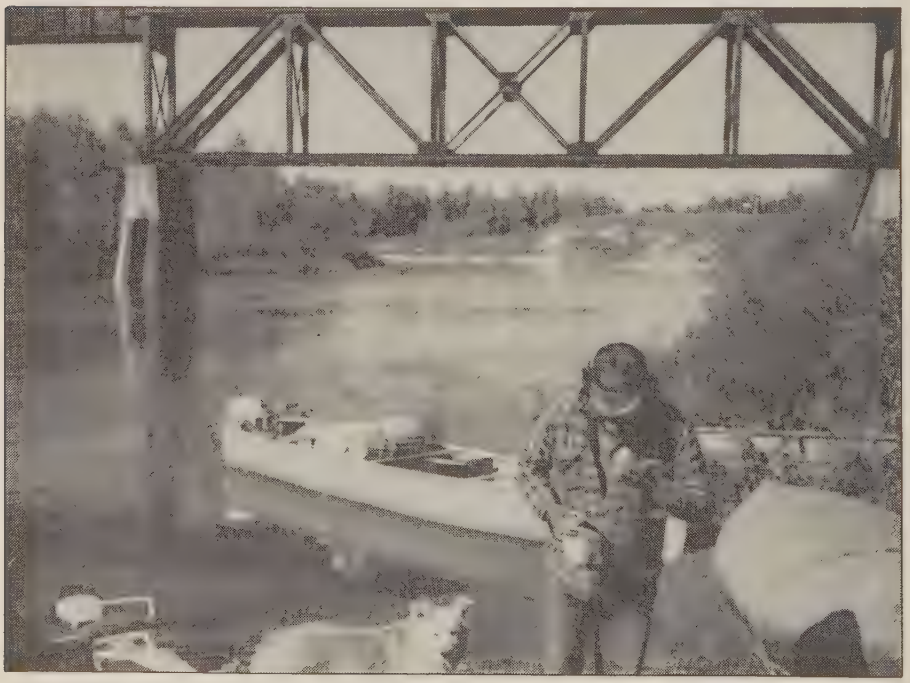
Merle Lofgren on the Pagwa River, 1985.

Ernie Taylor, our Indian guide, coming up the Pagwa River to the landing, 1985

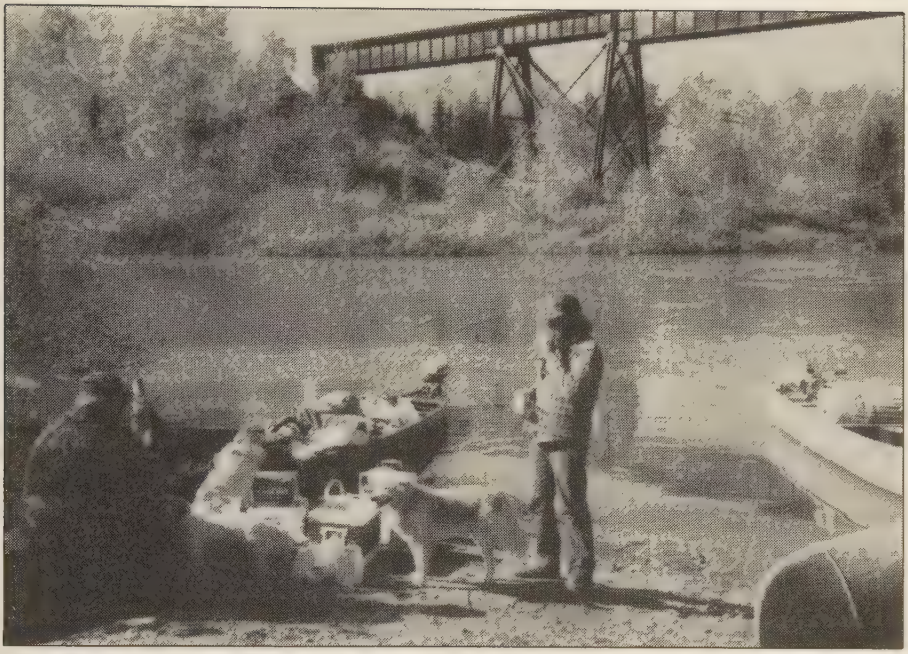
We made the trip up to Pagwa landing very easily as the water was high. About 14 miles from the landing, we saw a bull moose on the river bank. He slowly walked back into the bush as we went by. Caleb met us at the landing and this time he was fine. He did not call me a "minister." We arrived home fine. We tasted some of the spike bull right away and it was just super!

The following week Brian and I got ready to go again. We pulled my small trailer house along this time as we were not sure where we would hunt. We did not know for sure if we could get Ernie to guide us and a canoe. We had to go to Calstock to get Brian's bull tag. Then we found Ernie, but we could see he was not himself. As I mentioned earlier, we saw this bull moose 14 miles down the river. Saturday morning Ernie and Paul Wesley were going to go down river to try to find that moose. They found it dead. It had been fatally wounded.

They went further down to a camp of hunters from Windsor, Ontario. Those hunters said they had wounded that moose and were glad to get it. They celebrated and Ernie and Paul left quite late for the landing. Paul fell out of the canoe and Ernie managed to get him up on the bank when he noticed the canoe drifting down stream. Ernie had to swim to get the canoe. When he came back, Paul was no where to be found. This happened on Saturday. The authorities found the body on Thursday.



Ernie Taylor having lunch on our second trip on the Pagwa River in 1985.



Ernie Taylor, our guide, Brian Lofgren and Robert Lofgren, getting ready to go down the Pagwa River the second time, 1985.

We loaded everything into the two canoes and started down the Pagwa River. Ernie and Brian were in one canoe and I ran my own. The water was not so high as on the first trip but still pretty good, so we made it down to our campsite while it was still daylight. At our campsite we found a canoe and a tent, but no hunters were there. Ernie thought he knew the hunter by the pickup truck up at Pagwa. Soon a canoe with three hunters came. It was Gilbert Ferris and two young boys. Gilbert was a very large Indian and very witty. Ernie asked Gilbert if we could camp there also. Gilbert said, "I don't care; I don't own it!!" They said they were going to move farther up the Kenagomi River anyway.

The next morning Brian and Ernie went down the English River and I went up the Kenagomi. We were out all day and came back to camp late. None of us had seen anything. The other hunters were in camp. Gilbert said, "You should have stayed here. A large bull crossed the river right close by." They had a cow tag and two calf tags so they could not shoot the bull.

The next morning, Gilbert and the two boys packed up their equipment and went up the Kenagomi River. Again Brian and I went each in a different direction and, again, came back to camp without seeing anything.

The following day we happened to come back to camp for a while and we noticed a canoe coming toward out camp. The canoe was riding very low in the water which meant they had a very heavy load. It was Gilbert and the two

boys. I looked into their canoe and saw a cow and a calf moose. Gilbert said he had to shoot many times to scare away the bull. I asked, "Why didn't you shoot the bull for us?" He said, "I didn't know you wanted him!" I told him I was sure we would not get any moose as I had been up where they were hunting. It seems I am always at the wrong place at the right time.

Gilbert had a string of partridge. I asked him what he shot them with as I did not see a shotgun. He said, "I used my sling shot," and he showed it to me. He said his father used to take him down here to hunt moose but he would rather shoot partridge with his sling shot. After about five days of hunting, we decided to pack up and head for home. It is difficult to believe there were so many moose the first trip and none for us on our second trip.

We did some deer hunting in November of 1985 without much success. Brian hunted with his wife's father and brothers again. I hunted mostly alone. I am not too proud to tell about my hunting the last day, but then, I guess it was all right.

I came in for dinner about 1:00 on Sunday, the last day of the deer season. I told Inez I was going east of Hinckley to Harth's farm. It was about 3:00 p.m. when I arrived at Harth's home. I asked if it was all right for me to go out and hunt. Ruth replied, "There are still plenty of deer out there and the boys have been missing a lot!" I thought to myself that if I see one, I am not going to "miss." I climbed up in a tree stand. It was very clear and getting quite cold. The sun was about to set and I was getting cold so I decided to walk to the north end of the big hayfield. When I was about half way, I spied a deer down in a hollow. It was not too far away. I was using the 308 Browning. I had a peep site put on it but had not tried it out. The gunsmith that put it on said it should shoot all right. I took good aim and fired - the deer took off leaping. I was going to shoot again but nothing happened. I reloaded quickly, but by then the deer was too far away and going into the brush. I picked the shell out of the snow and put it in a different pocket and then looked for any sign that I had hit the deer. The deer was taking long leaps and no sign that I had hit it. I came to the north end of the field, and there stood a fawn in the brush looking at me. I thought, "I am going to get my deer yet!" Again I took aim and fired. The same thing happened - the deer took off leaping! Again I tried to shoot a second time and nothing happened. The deer had disappeared, so I put in another cartridge and this time the other cartridge fell in the rock pile on which I was standing, so I did not find that cartridge. There was no sign that I had hit this deer either.

I decided it was time to go home, so I started walking across the large hayfield. There to the west of me was another deer feeding. I got down on one knee and fired, and the deer came running toward me and then lay down. I thought sure I had hit it. I tried and tried to get that Browning to fire again but no success. The deer jumped up and with a few long leaps was gone into the brush. There was no sign that I had hit that deer either.

I stopped at the house and told Ruth Harth that was the most deer I had seen on the last day of a deer season and also the most shooting I had done.

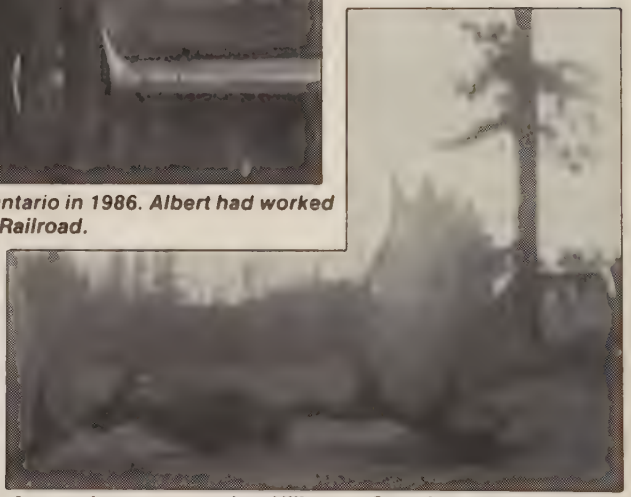
Harths have a fairly long driveway to their home and as I drove out the driveway, there were two deer to the East. I put one cartridge in the gun and walked out a ways so I could see the deer better. When they started to leap, I shot once and missed. I had seen five deer and shot at four and did not hurt the deer population at all! It was fun anyway. As I mentioned, it was very cold so the firing pin may have been partly frozen. Anyway, I went into the Outdoorsman and traded the Browning for a new 307 Winchester.

In 1986, Merle, Glen and Brian decided not to go moose hunting, which meant that I would go alone. I contacted several outfitters and found a bull tag at Loch Lomond Camp east of Long Lac. I was going to hunt in zone 21B. I took my trailer home and headed for Canada and another moose hunt. There were quite a few hunters staying at Loch Lomond Camp and they already had a few moose when I arrived as the Canadian residents can hunt two days ahead of non-residents. As usual, I covered a large area, but could not get a glimpse of a moose.

I took my trailer home and drove down to Hillsport to visit and hunt with Albert Ruben. As I mentioned before, he had guided us in previous years. We hunted two days without any success. Albert said he did not know of any other place to look so I decided to go back to Loch Lomond Camp. I did get some pictures of moose taken close to Hillsport. After six days of hunting without seeing any live moose, I headed for home. It is always good to get home safely.

Albert Ruben and his family at Hillsport, Ontario, 1986.

Albert Ruben at Hillsport, Ontario in 1986. Albert had worked for many years for the C.N. Railroad.



A very nice moose rack at Hillsport, Ontario, 1986.

A Canadian hunter with a very nice moose rack taken close to Hillsport, Ontario, 1986.

Brian was going to hunt deer with his wife's father and brothers, so I was going to hunt alone. I went over to our son David's woods where I had made a nice stand some time ago. About mid-morning a young buck came running with his nose close to the ground, most likely on a doe trail. I was using my new Winchester 307. I shot two times, but the buck kept going. I climbed down from my stand and went to check for blood. Sure enough, I found some and was following it when my son and daughter-in-law came driving down to tell me Linnea had seen the buck go into the neighbor's woods. She said it had a difficult time getting through the fence. I told David to go over to the neighbor, Loring Nelson, and tell him that I was going to trail a deer in his woods.

The trailing was easy at first, but then the blood droppings practically stopped. I came to a small body of water with sort of an island in it. I was sure the buck had gone into the water, so I thought, "If I am going to get this deer, I will have to get wet." Sure enough, I was almost to the island when I got a glimpse of the buck going the other way. I had no chance for a shot so I found his track, but the going was very slow as there was no blood now. Soon I heard one shot not too far away, but I kept on looking for the buck's track. After a while there was another shot and then shortly I heard a car horn blow three times. I knew that was signal for me to come out. Loring Nelson had come with David. They had driven on a road alongside of the woods when they saw the wounded buck by the road. Loring shot at him but missed and again the buck disappeared.

David made a circle and chased the buck up again. This time Loring got him. I had shattered the buck's lower jaw, just like with the buck in 1980. David put his tag on him, so we had one buck.

Son David Lofgren with the buck taken in 1986.

The second Sunday of the season, I went East of Hinckley to Harth's farm. Calvin Harth told me they had plenty of licenses to fill so I should take anything that had a flag and bounced!! Towards dusk, several deer came out on the hayfield to feed. I took one shot and missed as they were quite a distance away. There was nice snow on the ground and I checked for signs that I had hit one deer, but did not find any. They had all disappeared. I did sneak up on a lone doe on another field and was lucky enough to get that one. I did not fill my tag, but I felt I had my quota.

I planned to hunt moose again in 1987, so prior to the season Inez and I drove to Duluth to the Sportsmans Show to see Marvin Que who operates Endy's Landing close to Jellicoe, Ontario. I paid him $100.00 down for a bull tag for Zone 19.

Later on I took my trailer home on my hunting trip so I would be sure to have a place to stay if I wanted to stay longer. I arrived at Endy's Landing near Jellicoe, Ontario, Sunday noon and decided to spend the rest of the day scouting. I found a small lake with a few fairly fresh tracks near it so I decided to spend a day or two around the lake. I stopped at Pascha Lake Camp and saw several nice bulls hanging from the meat pole that the residents had bagged.

I was out early and came back to my trailer home late each night but saw no signs of a moose. Finally, on Thursday I had a hand in helping a hunter from Ohio get his cow moose. It was a lung shot so she did not go far from the road. It was very easy for the Ohio hunters to take out the cow. Even though I did not fill my bull tag, it was fun to see some action.

"The Old Moose Hunter" in good spirit, 1987.

"The Old Moose Hunter" on the left, with the moose and on the right, Dick Brown from Ohio, 1987.

We had a very nice snow Friday night so on Saturday I drove north where I knew the road construction crew was replacing a culvert in a washout. I had been there on Friday but was not yet able to cross the washout. Saturday morning the construction crew was just getting ready to leave. One man told me I was the first one to cross where the road was repaired. He said I should have good hunting as I was all alone. I spent all day in that area and saw only one track. On the way beck, I met a hunter and his wife. They had not seen any signs either. I was getting discouraged so I headed for home.

We were now into 1988 and Brian decided he would like to try moose hunting again. I contacted Marvin Que at Endy's Landing by Jellicoe, Ontario where I had stayed the previous year. He had one bull tag for me in Zone 21A I told Marvin to keep that bull tag for me and I would try to find one for Brian with some other outfitter. I called Grant's Cabins and they could give Brian a

cabin and one bull tag for Zone 21A also. I had not hunted in 21A before so I hoped we would see something in this area.

The moose season was to open the first part of October for residents and two days later for non-residents. I took my trailer home and left ahead of Brian as he had to work a day or two yet. So long as he was going to have a cabin by himself, his wife Bonnie decided to go with him.

I arrived at Endy's Landing Saturday evening. After getting the trailer home parked and everything ready, it was time to go to bed. I spent Sunday driving around in Zone 21A. I was quite disappointed as there was so much area where all the trees had been cut off. I did see where one moose had been taken right on the road. As I have mentioned before, this is different moose hunting than I have done in the past years. The rivers have been so low in the last few years that it is very difficult to travel on them. Then there is a new rule that you must come back to your outfitter where you are staying every night. You can not stay out in the bush which we used to do.

Brian and Bonnie arrived at Grant's Cabins Monday night. I drove over to see them and to discuss our plans for hunting on Tuesday. We decided Brian and Bonnie would cover the East side of Zone 21A and I would hunt the west side.

On Wednesday I decided to drive over to Pagwa and visit Caleb Ruben. I had heard a new road had been built on the west side of the Pagwa River that went as far as the old village of Pagwa. I was not sure about this as I asked two game wardens and they told me there was not a new road that ran up to Pagwa. To be sure to reach my destination, I took the road on the east side of the Pagwa River and drove the thirty miles where we had gone in previous years. There again I found most of the area had been cut off. It looked very different.

Caleb Ruben on the left; Walter Wesley on the right, in front of Caleb's home in Pagwa, 1988.

I found Caleb Ruben at his house and also Walter Wesley from Constance Lake was there. We visited for awhile and I was told there had been quite a few moose taken out by airplane from farther down the river.

I asked Walter Wesley if there was a new road on the west side of the river. He said that there was and he told me I could drive across the railroad bridge (no trains ran on it anymore) and take the new road down to Highway 11. I told him I did not know if I dared to cross the bridge. He said "You are not that old are you?" I decided to try it, but I was very frightened as it was a very long ways down to the river. I made it fine, but was very happy when I was across. I found the new road down to Highway 11. It was there just as I had been told.

The beautiful Pagwa River, seen from the edge of the railroad bridge, 1988.

The old railroad bridge I drove across in Pagwa. You can see the end of the railings; from there on there is no railing, 1988.

We were out early and stayed late without seeing anything. There were very, very few fresh signs. We saw several other hunters who had about the same luck. Towards the end of the week, we did see some moose hanging up that a group of hunters had taken. I visited with one Canadian hunter who said he had hunted many, many years and still had not shot his first moose.

Moose taken in Canada, 1988.

Grandson Brian with Canadian hunter's moose, taken in 21A, 1988.

Canadian hunter's moose taken in 21A, 1988.

On Friday, Brian and I decided to hunt in Zone 19 as we were permitted to shoot a calf moose in any zone. We met some hunters that I knew from Endy's Landing. They had just wounded a cow moose, so we helped them trail it for a long time. The cow moose quit bleeding completely and, with no snow, we finally had to give it up.

We met some Canadians who were trapping beaver. They had quite a few very nice beaver. I took several pictures of them, but for some reason they did not turn out at all.

We hunted until Saturday evening without seeing anything. As Brian had to be back to work, we decided to head for home. Another moose season without seeing a moose. I guess we are getting used to that kind of hunting now.

When the 1988 deer season came, Brian was going to hunt around Moose Lake with his father-in-law and brothers-in-law. So far Brian has not shot a deer while with that group. Some years they have done quite well and some years not so well.

I was going to hunt on Harth's farm again as they told me I was welcome to hunt there. I took my trailer home and arrived at Harths' Friday evening. I was out early Saturday morning and went to the north end of the large hayfield. I found a stand in the brush up on a hill and stayed there until I got very cold. I thought I should walk back to the trailer home and warm up but, on the way

back, I found a nice stump on which to sit along sort of a trail in the woods. I sat down, had a few sandwiches and a can of pop and I felt better.

It was snowing quite a little and was very windy. Pretty soon a doe and a fawn came walking. They stopped and looked at me. I looked at them and thought, "I maybe can get both of you," but then I had not talked to Calvin Harth to learn what kind of license they had. He was not home when I came in. I decided to let the deer go by.

Pretty soon the deer disappeared. I happened to think that so long as there is a doe around, maybe there will be a buck also. (Again, I am not proud to tell about this.) Sure enough, after a short while I looked over my shoulder and there stood a nice buck broadside. He was looking directly at me with his head high in the air. I was very cold and my hands were numb. I had a very difficult time lining up on him, but he was in no hurry—he just stood there looking at me. I thought I finally had a good bead on him. I pulled the trigger and MISSED him!! He just stood there. I think he was laughing at me! I reloaded my gun and drew bead again. Another clear miss. Then he came running toward me to have a closer look at me. He was now facing me. I shot the third time and THEN he really took off, leaping high.

My first thought was "What will I tell Brian about this kind of shooting?" I was really talking to myself - what a terrible poor shot I was. Again I drew bead fast and shot. I was sure I knocked him down. I could see his antlers as he was getting up. I went over there and, as I mentioned, there was sufficient snow for tracking. I followed his long leaps but not a drop of blood or any sign of any hair. I followed for quite a ways and was really disgusted with myself.

I thought I better go back to where I shot at the buck and look again. Sure enough, I found where he had fallen down, breaking off some brush and leaving marks on the snow. Now I started following him in earnest. Soon he had stopped and there were a few drops of blood. Pretty soon I found his first bed, with the spot in the same place; then the third, the fourth, etc. I found nine or ten beds, but now I was getting closer to the buck. The tracks were closer together and the beds closer also. Then I spied him lying down. I thought I would just walk up to him. In an instant, he jumped up and let out a blat and charged me. I was in no mood for trouble so I quickly shot him in the head. It was some terrible shooting on my part, but I wound up getting a nice buck.

I dragged him out and loaded him into the pickup. I stopped to tell the Harths that I had a nice buck. Now I could tell Brian I had shot a buck instead of all the misses.

I will always remember a picture we saw hanging on the wall in a restaurant at Waskish of a man skeleton and a moose skeleton and also the picture of a rifle that was jammed. Evidently the hunter wounded the bull moose and followed him. When the hunter caught up to the moose, the moose charged him and his rifle was useless to him.

Now we were into the year 1989. The winter of 1988 and 1989 was quite cold with very much snow in places, especially in Northern Minnesota. A large number of deer were found starving. This was in February and early March 1989, which means quite a bit of winter was left yet.

The newspaper article quoted below brought a smile to my face when I read it. I remember so well many years ago how I was told, "It does not work to feed deer hay and corn. They will die from it." I wonder if the digestive system of the deer has changed or if the people have changed their minds. I also remember very well that my grandson Brian's General Science teacher had told the class that deer can not digest hay and corn; they need to eat browse. At that time Brian took the movie projector and films to school and showed the class hundreds of deer eating hay and corn and remaining healthy.

DEATH ON THE TRAIL
Star Tribune, February 26, 1989
By Ron Schara

Roseau, Minnesota.

On a bitterly cold morning last week, two loggers, Duane Comstock and Lyle Roseen, finished sawing their last log within a small clearing in vast Beltrami Island State Forest.

On a nearby truck was piled the fruits of their labor: a stack of cedar destined to become finished wood or fence posts. In a day or two, Comstock and Roseen would haul away their bounty, leaving behind a winter woods that would become deathly quiet.

In more ways than one.

Deeper in the swamp, whitetail deer milled amid the shadows, waiting, perhaps, for the familiar buzzing sounds that have come to mean survival.

"When we started coming, there were only a few deer. Now look," Roseen said, nodding toward dozens of whitetails bounding away as two intruders sauntered toward them.

For weeks, discarded tree tops, the green boughs left behind by Comstock and Roseen, had been a daily table of survival food for a gathering of snowbound deer. But now the two loggers were done cutting and already the hungry deer had eaten every scrap of reachable cedar boughs.

"Don't know what'll happen to the deer now," said Roseen, his long, black beard laced with sawdust spewed by the chainsaw.

The question of deer survival in the winter of 1989 is being asked throughout northern Minnesota by DNR officials, deer hunters and other admirers of the whitetail.

Weeks of deep snow combined with severe cold have created the potential for extensive deer losses in the northern half of the state, which is occupied by an estimated 500,000 deer.

Staff Photos by Ron Schara

One of the hardest-hit regions is northwestern Minnesota, where the prairie flatlands meet the forest. Dead deer - fawns are the first to go - already are showing up in the Roseau area, where 24-plus inches of snow have hampered deer movement since January.

In the last few weeks, the local Roseau chapter of the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association (MDHA) has spent more than $10,000 for emergency deer supplies. "I think we're in the red, but we'll borrow the money if we have to," said Orris Rasmussen, a Roseau chapter member. Rasmussen said feeding starving deer has become a countywide effort. Last Wednesday, a 12-ton load of deer food was delivered "and most of it was gone, hauled out to the deer the next day," Rasmussen said.

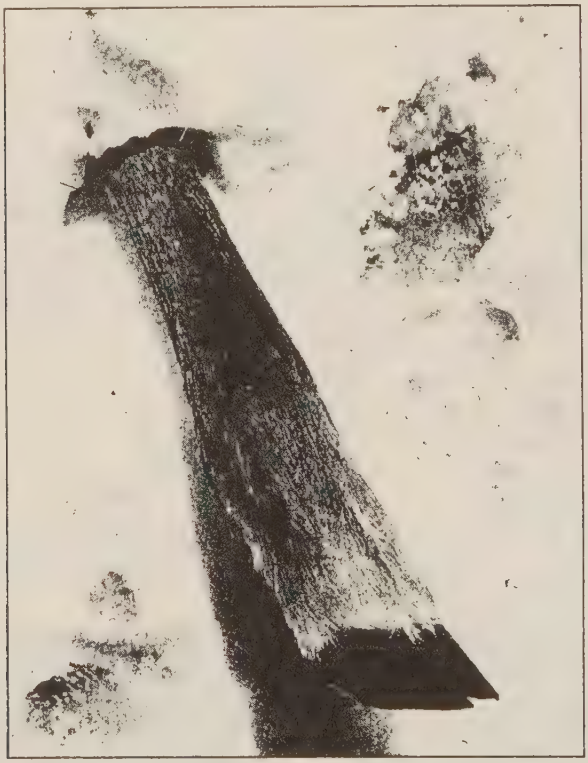
In the Red River Valley to the west, deer hunters and the DNR have combined forces to feed deer and bulldoze trails since early February. Elsewhere, emergency deer aid has been carried out mostly by private landowners and sportsmens groups.

Last week, the DNR leaped into the deer-feeding business.

Starting Friday, the DNR will distribute 20 tons of emergency deer rations at 54 dropoff points scattered across deer country. A network of volunteers, mostly members of the MDHA, will haul the feed to the snowbound deer yards.

"It's the first time I can remember we've launched a deer-feeding program as large as this one, covering one-half of the state," DNR official Roger Holmes said.

The DNR has asked the Legislature for an emergency $500,000 appropriation to finance the feeding operation. The proposal, authored by Sen. Gene Merriam, DFL-Coon Rapids, has moved through the legislative process with little resistance.



How many deer will be spared?

The DNR figures that 50,000 deer will be reached with the feeding operation, although it's unknown how many deer would die without help.

"Because they are a valuable wildlife species, I think it's legitimate and responsible for the DNR to protect that economic value," said DNR wildlife official Tim Bremicker, who heads the feeding operation.

Holmes said the DNR already has spent most of the $125,000 set aside for an emergency deer feed. He said the money was used for bulldozing trails and for aerial surveys to locate deer concentrations for feeding.

He said the DNR expects to spend upward of $250,000 for the special deer pellets that are being produced by Glencoe Mills.

For the location of deer feed depots, call DNR's regional offices: Bemidji, Grand Rapids or Brainerd. A 50-pound sack will feed one deer for about 25 days, DNR officials said.

What about hay? "Don't feed it," Holmes said, "unless it's top-quality alfalfa." Although hungry deer will eat hay, the stressed animal has difficulty digesting the food. Deer have been known to die of malnutrition with their stomachs packed with hay.

And dead deer are showing up.

A fawn here, a fawn there. A few other deer appeared to be weak last week, although the majority seemed to be alert in the snow-packed woodlands south of Roseau.

Duane Mattson, editor of the Roseau newspaper, said the deers' plight has given the community a common project, a common goal. "It's been a positive experience," said Mattson. "It's ironic that those people who a few months ago were trying to shoot the deer are the ones who now are most concerned."

Indeed, the DNR says that Twin Cities deer hunters also are invited to participate in the deer-feeding operations.

"We'll be asking for Twin Cities volunteers for the second wave, starting March 10," Bremciker said.

Deer hunters and others wishing to donate to the feeding project may send contributions to: Minnesota Deer Hunters Association, Box 413, Grand Rapids, Minnesota 55744.

How much is needed? The DNR figures it'll take $10 worth of pellets to feed a deer from Friday through to April 15.

It all begins Friday. Hundreds of deer hunters, snowmobilers and other fans of the whitetail will spend next weekend watching the drama of nature's oldest rule:

Survival of the fittest.

At the moment in Minnesota's woodlands, it has top billing.

This was a sad year for our family as my brother-in-law, Dr. Chauncey Kelsey, died March 1st. He had been in ill health for some time. I dare say there was not a better man put on this earth. He was very kind. He was very congenial about anything. He always did his share. He was always on time. To sum it all up, he was just "super fine."

We started to hunt deer together in 1943 when he and my sister Marion moved back from Minot, North Dakota. He did not miss many seasons. Some years he could not stay long as he had some very ill patients to care for back home. I am very thankful we had so many good trips together. I really do miss him when I go hunting.

I started in February, 1989 to try to find a validation tag for a bull moose license. The rivers have been very low the last two years so I decided not to plan on a river trip. I contacted a few outfitters and found a bull tag at Wildgoose Resort. The location was not far from where I had stayed the last two seasons. Moose season opened for the residents on October 7 and for the nonresidents on October 9 in Zone 19, the area in which I would be hunting.

I left home Friday evening, October 7, and arrived at Wildgoose Resort Saturday evening, October 8. I had a nice cabin and the two young men in the cabin next to me were from Michigan. It was their first moose hunt so they were wondering what to expect. I told them that I find the moose to be very scarce. I think hunting is 10% skill and 90% luck.

I scouted different areas all day Sunday. I found two small lakes close together with two or three fairly fresh tracks. I decided to spend Monday there. I was up early as Inez had sent some pancake batter with me and I was going to fry pancakes. They were good, but a far cry from the tasty pancakes Inez makes.

I got to the two lakes before daylight and spent most of the day there, but there was no sign of any moose. Towards evening, I drove and walked many old logging roads. I watched carefully for fresh tracks, but did not see anything. I came back to the cabin long after dark. After a while the two men from Michigan came over. They had not seen anything either, so they were a little discouraged.

The next day was much the same - looking for different roads and trails and looking for signs with the same negative results. I met many hunters and very few were successful. I did hear they had got four moose at Pascha Lake Camp. I do not know how many hunters, but I am sure there were around 30 hunters.

The third day was the same for me and also the Michigan hunters. The weather was beautiful, but a little too warm for hunting.

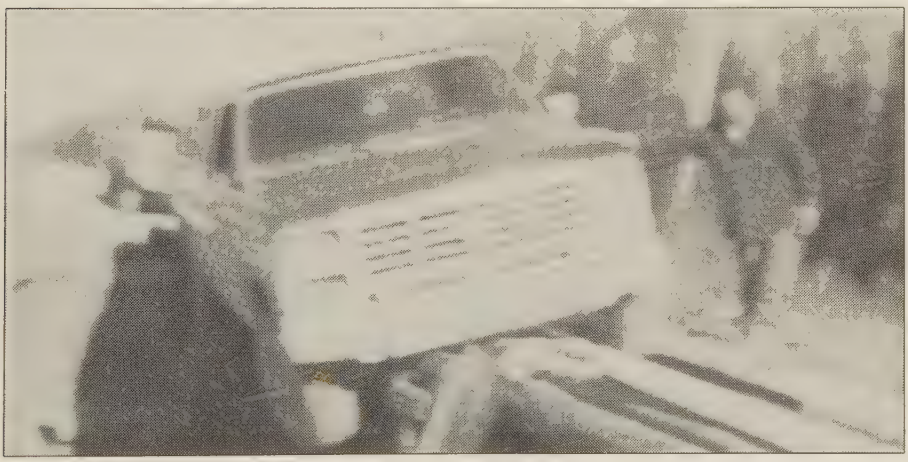
The fourth day I really covered a lot of country finding no fresh signs. Towards evening, I came by a small lake and a Canadian hunter was parked there so I stopped to visit. He asked, "Are you hunting moose?" I said, "Yes." He asked, "Are you all alone?" I said, "Yes." He said, "We are five in our party and everywhere we go you have been there. We know your tire tracks." I

asked him what kind of work he did in Canada. He said he ran a fishing business. I asked if he sold fish. He said, "No." He rented out fish houses and transported people out to them in the winter time. I said that I have not fished for 40 years. He said, "Just throw your line in that lake and you will catch a fish." I told him I did not have a pole so he took his as he had caught several fish there the night before. He threw out his line again and again. Finally I told him, "You won't catch a fish so long as I am here." He kind of laughed and said, "They must not be biting."

As usual it was way after dark when I got to the cabin. The Michigan men had taken their canoe on the river, but still no luck. Some hunters staying at Wild Goose had got a cow and a calf, so we did see some moose.

I forgot to mention that on Sunday, when I was scouting and was three-quarters of a mile from the blacktop Highway 11 and right by the gravel road, I saw three men out in the long grass stooped over working on something. I asked if they got a moose. They replied, "We got two of them!" I went over to look at them. They had just started to dress the first moose. They were two nice young cows. I said, "And you had two cow tags?" They said they were "Treaty Indians" and could shoot them any time. I told them they should have some fine eating.

The fifth day I went visiting, like I have done other years. I drove over to Pagwa to visit Caleb Ruben. He is now 76 years of age. The first thing he asked me when I came in his home was, "Are you still a minister?" I said, "I am not a minister; I just do not drink."



When I drove up to Pagwa, I needed to cross this bridge. I did not know if I dared try to cross it, but I made sure the front wheels were lined up with the timbers of the bridge. I made it across the timbers safely and also returned, so I was relieved.

The Italian hunter whom I had met previously was not so lucky in attempting to drive his pickup across the bridge.

This is the Italian hunter sitting in his canoe on the Pagwa River.

I am embarrassed to tell this but, when I came to the railroad bridge in Pagwa that I drove across with my pickup last year, I hesitated to walk across. It was very windy and that bridge seems very high so I just waited a while. Then a nice young Indian boy came on his all-terrain vehicle. I asked him if he would take me over to see Caleb. "Sure, no problem," he answered. It went better riding with him. He also took me back.

This is the all-terrain vehicle the police officer was driving when he was killed, 1989.

I had never seen Pagwa River so low. I took my pickup and drove across the river and back. I guess one thing that had frightened me was that the Tuesday before I was there (I was there on Thursday), a six-foot, two inch policeman from Long Lac was killed there on his all-terrain vehicle. His vehicle rolled over and his neck was broken. I had my picture taken with an Italian hunter by the vehicle.

Pagwa seems to be a dangerous place. On the way back I took a road I had never been on before. I thought it was all wilderness north of Highway 11 between Long Lac and Pagwachin River, about 60 miles, but I found almost all the trees had been cut off. I did not see much feed or cover for the moose.

On the way back, I stopped to visit the Martin hunters from Huntsville, Ontario. So far they did not have any moose. Usually they would get quite a few. I stopped at Lukinto Lake Lodge and the owner and his friend were doing the same thing as when I stopped last year—cutting up their moose! They each took a bull moose with bow and arrow. That does not make me feel very proud. The Lukinto Lake road is where Chauncey shot two bulls in 1955. I did some hunting up that road, but saw nothing.

The sixth day was the same as the prior days. I visited with many hunters and they agreed with me that there are not many moose around. The sixth day I seemed to cover more area than ever with the same results except that I did not see a single hunter in the bush. I guess other hunters were discouraged also.

When I got back to the cabin, there was a note on the door from the Michigan men. They had left for home at noon without having seen any moose. I packed up also and headed for home as there was a 50th wedding anniversary in the family that I wanted to attend.

When I crossed the border into Minnesota, there was a group of hunters from Wisconsin there - four hunters, two fishermen and a lady cook. The four hunters had taken four moose the first day - a bull, a cow and two calves. Again I say I think hunting is 10% skill and 90% luck. One young fellow had got a nice bull last year and a nice one this year.

My cousin Merle Lofgren and his wife Mary flew to a lake in Zone 18B from Nakina. As far as I know, they did not bring a moose home either. At least we did try hard. I enjoyed the trip very much and have already made inquiries about hunting in 1990.

The moose season in Minnesota opened October 7, the day I passed through Grand Marais. There were several groups in Minnesota that already had their moose. I just missed seeing one with a 52-inch spread. My neighbor Dennis Johnson and his group drew a permit for Minnesota. One of the group told me it took them until mid-afternoon the first day to get their moose. The other groups had theirs by 9:00 a.m. Must be more moose in Minnesota!!

Moose taken at Pascha Lake near Jellicoe, Ontario, 1989.

Hunters and moose taken at Pascha Lake Camp, near Jellicoe, Ontario, 1989.

This 650-pound, field-dressed bull moose was shot near Greenbush, MN, by the hunting party of (L-R) Harold Lind, Dennis Johnson, Doug Johnson and Richard Friday. The group has applied for the lottery license since 1971 and this is the first time they have been selected. Season is open on moose in Minnesota every other year. Doug Johnson is from Isle. The other hunters are from Rush City.

Brian and I had applied for antleress deer permits and both of us were lucky. We hunted deer east of Hinckley the first day. We saw some deer but did not get shooting. Brian and I went back Tuesday afternoon and stayed in my trailer home overnight. Brian shot a fawn Wednesday evening. We put my tag on it. Brian and I went back there on Saturday. Brian was up in a tree when a doe and two fawns walked within 20 steps of him! He thought they were too pretty to shoot. He had already shot a fawn and he did not want to shoot the mother deer so he let them go by. I told him I was glad he did that; there will be more deer for next year.

Brian Lofgren's deer taken in 1989.

I had not finished picking our corn and I had to get the livestock in for the winter, so I did not do any more hunting. I left two acres of corn as I was having trouble with the corn picker. I thought MAYBE some deer would stay around for the winter. I went down there one evening in January. I counted 15 deer in the corn or coming into the corn field. This is the first year since we have lived on our farm (1944) that we have seen deer in January. I believe the deer are learning to come back to feed where food has been made available to them. I shall be sure to leave corn for them again next year.

This is the year 1990, and concluding this hunting history caused me to think of the many interesting people I have met during my life. I wrote Alex Stephens in Castock, Ontario asking him for a little history about his early life. I

received the letter quoted below from Alex's son Stanley, written in the person of Alex.

January 16, 1990

Dear Robert,

I was pleased to receive your letter just recently. It was good to hear from you once again. As for myself, I am doing well, but I am getting too old to go trapping or hunting. This is one thing I miss doing. I had an operation three years ago that really slowed me down, but I still manage to do a little bit of work around the house. I do not know if I told you that my wife Bella passed away last Christmas weekend. She was 76 years old. Also, my son-in-law Paul passed away this past summer.

Things in Constance Lake are about the same, and although we do have many social problems in our community, we still manage to get by.

Congratulations on your 35 years of moose hunting. I am positive that you have collected a lot of good memories from those hunts. I also want to wish you lots of luck on the book that you are planning to write. Please send me a copy once you have completed it.

It will give me great pleasure to provide you some of the information or share some stories for your book.

I was born in 1914 and raised in Port Albany, Ontario, in the James Bay area. I lived in Port Albany in my childhood days. There were four children in my family - three boys and a girl. I was the third youngest in the family. My parents came up from Albany River in 1929 to reside in Mammamattawa Trading Post. When my parents came up the river from Port Albany, they used long ropes to pull the loaded canoes that were loaded with their supplies and camping equipment. We used tents and sometimes we slept under a big tree for overnight shelter. Flour, sugar and dry milk were the only basic foods we carried because, in those days, there were plenty of fish and game available when we needed it.

During our stay in our new home, all of us in the family suffered from tuberculosis, from which my mother, sister and two brothers have died.

Mammamattawa, in Cree language, means the place where all the rivers meet. Mammamattawa River Post was a trading place for Hudson Bay Company and Revellin Company. Both of these companies were trading furs with native people in that area.

Both of these fur trade companies got their supplies by transporting them by big barges or scows coming from Moose Factory, Ontario via Port Albany Post. However, in later dates, supplies were transported from Pagwa River Post using barges, in winter using sleds and dogs.

Between 1945 and 1947, Mammamattawa native people started moving out of the Post to seek work in Pagwa or other areas in the CNR line, like Nakina, Long Lac and Calstock. My wife Bella and I moved to Pagwa in 1946 to have my two oldest children attend school there.

Because of lack of employment in Pagwa, around 1950 we moved to Constance Lake Reserve in Calstock. I had a job in the logging camp for Lecour Lumber Company. I worked just seasonally with this company. When not working, I usually trapped or guided hunters to support my family. I had not gone to school, but I managed to get by without any formal education. The only class room I ever attended in my life was the great outdoors, which provided all things I needed to survive back then.

I can recall in 1946 there were a lot of red fox. We snared and trapped 130 fox that one season. However, the price of a red fox hide was only $12.00 and $25.00 for cross-fox.

In 1947 I purchased my first outboard motor, which was a 5 H.P. for $200.00. Traveling by boat with a motor was much faster and easier; that was progress for me.

Trapping and hunting are the two things I have been doing all my life. This is a family tradition I carried through all my life, but life has changed now with the new generation.

I met my wife Bella in Mammamattawapost and we were married in 1936. We have eight children - six girls and two boys. I must say I had a good but tough life and I thank God I have lived this long.

Yes!! There were a lot of moose back then. We saw about 50 in just one day on the river, but they seemed to disappear all of a sudden. Other animals were also plentiful, like beaver, muskrat and fox. When civilization came along, many wild animals began to decrease in number, continuing up to this day.

I hope I am providing the information that you wanted for your book. I will be glad to provide some more information should you need it. I enjoyed all the hunting I have done with you. I wish you all the best in the world. May God bless you and your family.

Love,

Alex Stephens

P.S. I am trying to buy a pair of over boots like you used to bring for me. They do not seem to make these type of boots any more. I wonder if you could find some in the states for me. Send a couple pair, if you can find them.

In reading this book, I hope some of the pleasures and interesting experiences which have been part of my life while enjoying the great outdoors have become meaningful to you.

It would have been much easier for me to do this writing had I made notes each year as we hunted, but my writing has been strictly from memory. If I was not positive about some events, I did not write about them.

Following are some interesting miscellaneous pictures I wish to include.

I have never seen pictures like these in my life. (And they are real!!) 32 Wisconsin hunters took 30 bucks while hunting north of Hayward, Wisconsin. There are 28 bucks hanging here. Two hunters had taken their bucks home with them. Leigh Livermore of Hudson, Wisconsin, gave Brian these pictures, 1989.

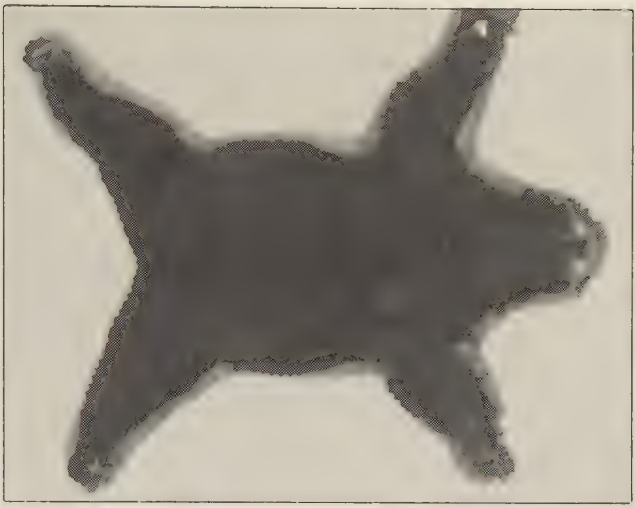
Four young hunters with their four bear taken near Grantsburg, Wisconsin some years ago. I have never before seen four bear hanging on one meat pole.

Every winter more than 100 deer are killed by traffic on North Shore Drive No. 61. Remember, this is a serious winter hazard. If you hit a deer you can expect a repair bill, surely on the car, possibly on the occupants. Slow down a little when deer are sighted.

Visitors to see the deer are always welcome. Bring your cameras. Deer can usually be seen here any time of day from January through April (close up). One half mile north of No. 61 on County No. 4 (Caribou Trail). Thank you.

LUTSEN DEER FEEDING YARD. E. W. Funk

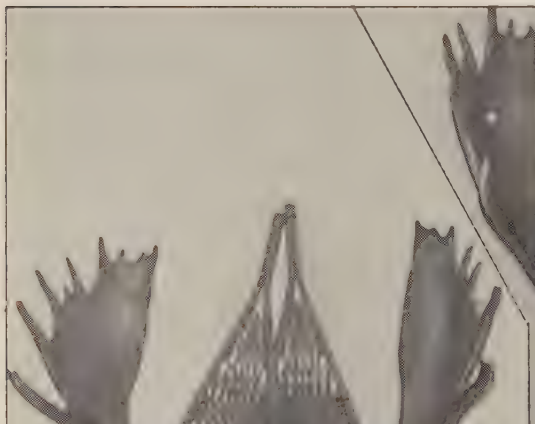
Earl Funk was one of the most responsible and caring men who fed the deer on the North Shore. He died in the middle 1970s. Earl would hand out these cards to visitors.

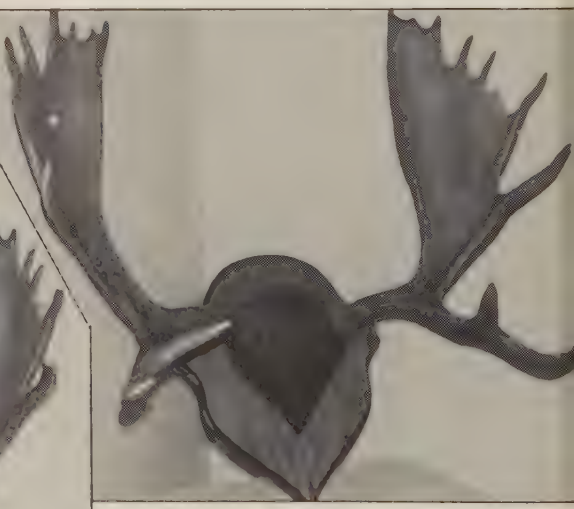


This rug was made from a bear Dr. Kelsey shot in the state of Wyoming in 1952.

This buck was taken with a Winchester 44-40 in the St. Croix Park east of Hinckley in 1945. This buck was old and thin. He weighed 175 pounds. The head was mounted by Leo Young of Rush City.

This buck was taken with a Winchester 32 Special, north of Duxbury in 1957. The buck weighed 227 lbs. and was also mounted by Mr. Leo Young of Rush City.





These are the largest moose antlers that I have taken in all the years I have hunted. The bull moose was taken with a Winchester 32 Special on the Nagagami River in 1961. I am still lookin for "the BIG ONE"!

These are pictures of the moose head Dr. Kelsey had mounted. He took this moose with a Remington 30-06 a little off of the Chipman Lake Road in 1955.

These beautiful mittens and moccasins were made for me by Mrs. Christine Ruben of Calstock, Ontario.

This moose was taken on the English River by Merle Lofgren and Glen Holmstrom in 1985.

I have mentioned before in this book that we used horses to pull our moose out of the bush. I remember well when Roland Malenfant told me it would not be long before there would not be any more horses used in the bush. The cutting and everything would be done with machinery. I have certainly seen that happen. It will not be long until there will not be anyone left that has farmed with horses. I have always been very fond of good horses.

I had a chance to attend a draft horse field day in 1988 where I saw all these fine horses. Mr. Carl Schlaeger of Pine City took these pictures of these fine horses, so I would like to put them in this book, where other people may see them.

Two brown horses on the outside and a white horse in the center pulling a one-bottom plow.

Four beautiful black horses pulling a harrow and two pretty black horses pulling a one-bottom plow.

Two black horses on the outside and two white-faced horses in the center pulling a disc.

Three very nice light brown horses pulling a one-bottom plow.

A very nice six-horse hitch pulling a wagon.

A very nice six-horse hitch pulling a plow belongs to Clarence Nordstrom of Pine City.

This powerful nine-horse hitch pulling a three-bottom plow belongs to Clarence Nordstrom of Pine City. There are three teams of three horses abreast.

I think this is my favorite team. The one on the left is named King and weighs 2,260 lbs. The one on the right is named Ed and weighs 2,180 lbs., a total of 4,440 lbs.

The "Old Moose Hunter" busy writing.

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